

# THE GATEWAY

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## CFS-S cuts plaintiffs a deal, finally

Over a decade of legal disputes regarding Travel Cuts ownership settled out of court

ROSS PRISAKOWSKI  
News Staff

More than ten years after it began, and just days before the dispute was set to finally land in court, a pre-trial settlement was reached and approved by all parties regarding the ownership of Travel Cuts, providing the plaintiff students' unions with part ownership of the company.

Under the settlement between the plaintiff student governments at the University of Alberta, University of British Columbia, University of Western Ontario and Queen's University, and Canadian Federation of Students Services (CFS-S), a national student services organization, the plaintiffs will receive 24 per cent ownership of Travel Cuts and two seats on its board of directors. CFS-S will retain ownership of the remaining 76 per cent and control six seats on the board.

**"To pursue this on a matter of principle and to see that vindicated at the end just shows that starting the legal action was a good decision to take."**

SU PRESIDENT GRAHAM LETTNER

"It's clear in the settlement, and it's clear in the work that we've done, that the plaintiffs were wronged in the past," said University of Alberta Students' Union president Graham Lettner. "To pursue this on a matter of principle and to see that vindicated at the end just shows that starting the legal action was a good decision to take."

"We thought we were treated unfairly, and you can never put a cost on justice," added Ryan Dunn, President of the University Students' Council (USC) at the University of Western Ontario. "I think that this settlement works out for both parties and I think that CFS-S and the plaintiff schools are happy that we've finally finished with the action."

The settlement resolves a protracted dispute between the student governments and CFS-S—a lawsuit that was originally filed by USC in 1996.

PLEASE SEE TRAVEL CUTS • PAGE 3



**GET OUT THE BROOMS** The Bears volleyball team rolled over their competition this past weekend, as they swept the Manitoba Bisons 3-0 on Friday night, then handed the second-ranked Trinity Western Spartans a 3-0 sweep on Saturday to claim their second Canada West championship in as many years.

## Conference explores Alberta's postsecondary advantage

With the province's booming economy, education stakeholders are discussing investment strategies

JAMES STORRIE  
News Staff

Proposals for radical change were in the air last weekend as education representatives from across the province, ranging from students' union delegates to Alberta Minister of Advanced Education Dave Hancock, met to discuss the future of Alberta's postsecondary education.

The conference was hosted by Public Interest Alberta (PIA), a provincial education advocacy group, and presented a variety of radically different proposals.

The keynote presentation on Friday evening set the tone for the weekend, with two speakers laying out significantly divergent visions for the future. Jeffrey Simpson, a *Globe and Mail* columnist best known for his regular foreign affairs reporting, presented an agenda that was both pragmatic and businesslike.

"No university in Canada can raise its game, move up the ladder of North American rankings, without the support of the public sector," he said.

Simpson compared his ideal vision of Canadian universities to that of the best American schools, which he characterized as "engines of success, leaders of social mobility and the finest

institutions of society." He went on to say that Alberta's economic boom creates a large demand for educated professionals and the government funds to support their production, and if the province is to prosper in the long run, it must invest the windfall oil revenue in education.

And though long-term investments are difficult to sell to a voting public, Simpson said that Alberta's propensity for a one-party system could provide that opportunity—if the Conservatives promote the vision.

"To move forward you need good leaders: leaders who will offer you more than just cheesy tax rebates," he said. "You have the power to make Alberta the top place in North America for medical research. You have the power to become North America's leader in sustainable energy development. That's where real leadership is."

As if to underscore his point, Simpson's presentation was followed by Peter MacMenamin, deputy general secretary of the Teachers' Union in Ireland.

MacMenamin pointed to Ireland's rapid embrace of postsecondary expansion, which has culminated in the last ten years with complete abolition of tuition fees for a first degree.

PLEASE SEE EDUCATION • PAGE 2



**LOOKING UP TO AMERICA** Jeffrey Simpson challenges Canadian universities.

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## I'm only five years old

Or at least I would be if I were born on 29 February. This creates problems, and Adam Gaumont has solutions.

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## Winner twice over

Janna Konihowski is going to nationals with the Pandas volleyball team and the track and field squad.

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Suite 3-04  
Students' Union Building  
University of Alberta  
Edmonton, Alberta  
T6G 2J7

Telephone 780.492.5168  
Fax 780.492.6666

E-mail gateway@gatewayjournal.ca

## editorial staff

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF Daniel Kaszor  
cic@gatewayjournal.ca | 492.5168

MANAGING EDITOR David Berry  
managing@gatewayjournal.ca | 492.6664

SENIOR NEWS EDITOR Jake Troughton  
news@gatewayjournal.ca | 492.7308

DEPUTY NEWS EDITOR Chloé Fiedio  
deputynews@gatewayjournal.ca | 492.6664

OPINION EDITOR Tim Peppin  
opinion@gatewayjournal.ca | 492.6663

ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR Mikel Larocque  
entertainment@gatewayjournal.ca | 492.7052

SPORTS EDITOR Chris O'Leary  
sports@gatewayjournal.ca | 492.6652

PHOTO EDITOR Matt Frehner  
photo@gatewayjournal.ca | 492.6668

DESIGN & PRODUCTION EDITOR Iris Tse  
production@gatewayjournal.ca | 492.6661

## business staff

BUSINESS MANAGER Steve Smith  
biz@gatewayjournal.ca | 492.6669

AD SALES REPRESENTATIVE Patrick Czolek  
sales@gatewayjournal.ca | 492.6700

AD GRAPHIC DESIGNER Lisa Lum  
design@gatewayjournal.ca | 492.6647

CIRCULATION PAL Adam Gaumond  
circulation@gatewayjournal.ca | 492.6669

CIRCULATION PAL Tyson Kaban  
circulation@gatewayjournal.ca | 492.6669

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## contributors

Ross "choc" Puzoskiwski, Mike Kendrick, Adam Gaumond, John Knecht, Nina Zarana, Amanda Ternes, Chris Krause, Fraser Triggs, Mike Robertson, Marie Anvik, Ivan, Jeff Martin, Curtis van Marck, Alex Bailey, Dana Kopyevski, Amanda "webster" Ash, Benoit Ostad, Edmon Rotea, Andrew Renfrew, Robin Cullen, Nick Frost, Ashley Scarlett, Ian Naude, Phil Hoad, James Stovin, Tristan Fikselberg, Weijiang Li, Kim Smith, Peter Yee, Neal Wilding, Leanne Fong and Alexandra Rollins.

## Premiers team up for postsecondary education

NADYA BELL  
CUP Ottawa Bureau Chief

OTTAWA (CUP)—An informal dinner conversation could shape the future for postsecondary education in Canada, or at least lead to more federal money for students.

Eight provincial premiers left a national summit on postsecondary education on 24 February in Ottawa vowing to take up the issue again later during their dinner at 24 Sussex Drive with Prime Minister Stephen Harper.

The Council of the Federation summit on postsecondary education left over 400 delegates, including premiers, students and university representatives united in the call for increased federal funding.

Still, there's disagreement between politicians and students over how the money should be spent at the provincial level.

In the opening remarks, Quebec Premier Jean Charest said the federal government would have to come up with \$4.9 billion to restore funding to 1994/95 levels, accounting for inflation.

"We must have a plan, and we must be able to fund it," said Charest. "Over the last ten years, the federal support hasn't been there."

"We say that we value education, but do we really? Are we really making the necessary investments and doing the necessary work?" said Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty. "This summit is an opportunity for us to challenge ourselves, and then, coming out of this to challenge Canadians to reach higher in education."

Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) Chairperson George Soole said it was encouraging that the premiers



SERIOUS ABOUT LEARNING Ontario's Dalton McGuinty (left), Quebec's Jean Charest and Manitoba's Gary Doer.

were joining students in the call for more federal money.

During the conference discussion groups, delegates focused on the \$4.9 billion figure as a central point of discussion about federal funding. However, McGuinty said he would be asking Harper for \$2.2 billion when negotiations begin.

Newfoundland and Labrador Premier Danny Williams said postsecondary education will be the first major issue put to Harper by the premiers and should be on the national list of priorities.

But even with more money, the two premiers leading the Council of the Federation summit—McGuinty and

Charest—may lift the tuition freezes in their respective provinces.

"We have frozen tuition for two years, and now we feel justified in asking Ontario families to do a bit more so that together we can build a great system," McGuinty said. "Saying accessibility to postsecondary education is still a public priority, Jesse Greener, Ontario Chairperson of the CFS, said he was disappointed by McGuinty's statement.

"It's profoundly disappointing that Dalton McGuinty and people like Bob Rae and some university presidents are deafening themselves to that wide-ranging call," Greener said. "I think among the provinces there is wide-

ranging unanimity around the belief that tuition fees are much too high."

President of Carleton University David Atkinson said there's growing regional differences between universities across Canada. He said Canada doesn't have a single world-class university because it hasn't been a federal priority, and the provinces deal with the matter differently.

"It used to be that we'd lose faculty to the US, now we lose them to Alberta and BC," said Atkinson.

Alberta Advanced Education Minister Dave Hancock was also in attendance at the summit, along with 34 other representatives from the province.

## Alberta students still waiting for new tuition policy

EDUCATION • CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

The development of such a well-educated workforce, MacMenamin said, has been at the core of Ireland's dramatic move from impoverished society to Europe's "Celtic Tiger."

Taking a different stance from Simpson, MacMenamin made the case that education cannot be seen merely as an economic investment, but a social one, and that governments had a moral obligation to support education regardless of all economic concerns.

"What is the purpose of education?" asked MacMenamin. "There's one view that you produce to feed an economy, but that's just a necessary by-product. It's because all people ought

to have the right to self-improvement.

"I'm not at any stage saying that removal of all fees is the most pressing issue, but at some point you have to say that unequal education is an impediment to a free and egalitarian society," he added.

Simpson was critical of the idea of removing all fees, pointing to a history of government under-funding in various social projects, and suggested that fees remained the best way for individual universities to ensure their quality of service doesn't drop. Still, he suggested that greater funding for institutions across the board was necessary, whether from public or private sources.

**"I'm not at any stage saying that removal of all fees is the most pressing issue, but at some point you have to say that unequal education is an impediment to a free and egalitarian society."**

PETER MACMENAMIN,  
IRELAND TEACHER'S UNION

Furthermore, he said that curtailing the province's rising health care budget might be the way.

Dave Hancock, speaking at the close of the conference, was careful to skirt around direct discussions of free tuition or health care cuts, but asserted that the Conservative government recognized the importance of postsecondary education and the demand that Alberta's growing economy was presenting for well-educated employees.

In 2005, the provincial government initiated a review of postsecondary education in Alberta, and though no decisions have been made to date, promises for a new tuition policy in the 2006/07 academic year are in the works.

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# CLAW targets explosive weapons

U of A graduate brings attention to Canadian Landmine Awareness Week

EDMON ROTEA  
News Staff

All over the world, millions of lives are threatened daily by the existence of landmines—but one young advocate is determined to change that situation.

Fresh from her six-month internship working abroad in the Republic of Azerbaijan, recent U of A graduate and landmine-awareness advocate Kendra Jepsen is determined to educate Canadians about the dangers that landmines pose to millions around the world.

"Living in Canada, we don't have a landmine problem. Most of us have no idea what it's like pull your car up to the side of the road or walk through the ditch or an open field with the constant fear of a landmine exploding—it's a danger that still exists in many countries today," said Jepsen.

Living in Azerbaijan, a country heavily affected by landmines after years of war with neighbouring states and former Soviet military control, Jepsen gained a new perspective on the landmine issue. Working as a researcher for the non-governmental organization Azerbaijan Campaign to Ban Landmines (ACBL), she learned about the threats that unexploded ordnances (UXOs) pose to rural dwellers in the countryside.

"When the Soviets left, the biggest munitions warehouses in the South Caucasus region were located in Azerbaijan. Fires eventually caused some of these munitions warehouses to explode and literally scatter weapons and ordnances all over the nearby countryside—many of which have not completely exploded," she explained.

The abundance of UXOs scattered throughout the Azerbaijan countryside threaten many rural dwellers' lives, and even their livelihoods.

"All through my time there, people were getting injured, especially if they were collecting scrap metal to sell or build fences with; eventually someone would pick up an object that was explosive."

Even decades-old landmines left over from the World War II and the Armenian conflict still remain a threat—a danger that persists throughout Eastern Europe and many former Soviet republics. Many of these coun-



ALBERTA RETTESHA

**NOT A MINOR ISSUE** U of A grad Kendra Jepsen campaigns against landmines.

tries, in addition to the United States and the People's Republic of China, have yet to become signatories of the 1999 Ottawa Treaty, an international agreement to ban the production and use of anti-personnel mines.

One of the aims of the ACBL project is to put pressure on the Azerbaijan government to join the Ottawa Treaty, while also collecting and compiling data for the International Landmine Monitor Report, Jepsen said, adding that in 2005 there were 63 landmine casualties in Azerbaijan, including eleven deaths.

Currently, Jepsen works as a outreach and education coordinator for Mines Action Canada (MAC), a local landmine-awareness organization. As part of Canadian Landmine Awareness Week, which runs from 27 February to 5 March, the organization will be hosting several events throughout the Edmonton area to promote their cause, including film screenings, panel discussions and lectures by local Edmontonians and

international guests working on the landmine issue.

The organization will even construct a simulated minefield in the McNicoll Park area in Old Strathcona, and in Quad on Thursday.

"We're going to get people to think about what it would be like if there was a minefield in their neighbourhood, because a lot of communities throughout the world do have that danger. We'll have demarcation tape—marking off an area that's an area of danger and have mine warning signs," explained Jepsen.

Ultimately, the organization's goal is to foster greater commitment from Canada to make a difference internationally.

"We're calling on the federal government to devote a minimum of \$1 per Canadian per year, towards the landmine issue [until it's resolved worldwide]. It's part of our obligation as a member of the Ottawa Treaty to help other countries," Jepsen concluded.

## Prospect of long trial prompts settlement

TRAVEL CUTS • CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

The dispute arose after the Association of Student Councils Canada (AOSC)—of which the plaintiffs were members—transferred all of its assets and liabilities, including Travel Cuts, to a successor organization, CFS-S, which the plaintiffs were not members of. Plaintiff groups argued that they should see the full benefits of the company, including free International Student Identity Cards (ISIC), given to all undergraduate student associations, whether they joined AOSC's succeeding organization or not—which CFS-S disputed.

"I don't think anyone can argue that it wasn't the intention of AOSC to have these assets and liabilities transferred to its successor organization," said CFS-S Executive Director Philip Link. "We're trying to be true to its members of AOSC—and when I say members, I'm obviously talking about the majority of the members, because with any decision there's a small minority of people who are always against things."



WEIYANG LIU

**NO TRIP TO COURT** Travel Cuts lawsuit finally reaches a settlement.

Both sides say the prospect of an eight-to-ten-week trial and the resulting legal costs persuaded them to find a settlement that will affect the governance structure of Travel Cuts, but not its day-to-day operations. While both parties admitted that settling this matter took longer than first imagined, both think they can put the strained relationship behind them.

"This now means that all parties are working towards the same thing, so it's a positive outcome," said Link. "It's certainly one that we feel comfortable going forward with and I'm sure the plaintiffs feel comfortable going forward with as well; certainly I think it's what's in the best interests of Travel Cuts and that was first and foremost what we were interested in."

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# Research suggests aging brains can't keep up with pace of modern TV

While classic programming is easy to follow, research suggests Alzheimer's patients struggle to understand newer, complex shows

AMANDA ASH  
News Staff

Modern TV shows and their fast-paced plots might be intriguing, but according to a group of Edmonton researchers, they may be too complex for those viewers suffering from Alzheimer's disease.

Dr. Bonnie Dobbs, gerontologist and associate director of the U of A Rehabilitation Research Centre, conducted a study in conjunction with two other investigators regarding contemporary TV programs and their accessibility to Alzheimer's patients.

**"As a group, seniors do watch and benefit from television, so perhaps they can soon retain some of that enjoyment in their declining years."**

BOB HELLER,  
ATHABASCA UNIVERSITY

"Our hypothesis is that television programs are no longer congruent with the cognitive abilities for those who have gone into long-term care facilities," Dobbs explained. "In other words, there's a mismatch between the programming on television and the cognitive abilities of those in long-term care facilities."

Over a two-week period, Dobbs' team observed 24 Alzheimer's patients from McConnell Place West,

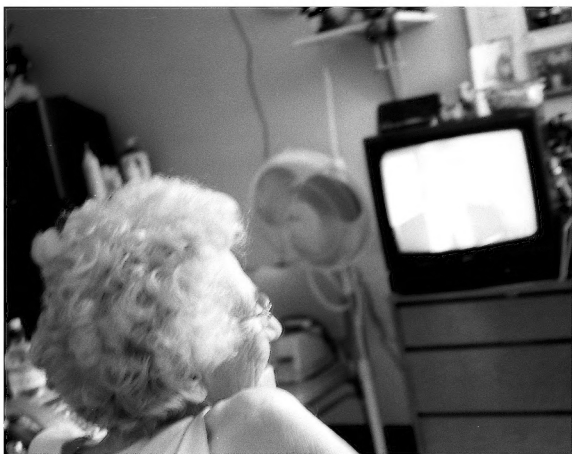
a centre operated by the Capital Health Group. Each patient's response to various genres of shows was recorded, and although the study's findings are still being analyzed, Dobbs is curious to understand why older shows like *I Love Lucy* appear to be more approachable than other, newer ones.

"Our rationale for *I Love Lucy* is that it was a program that was popular when the individuals were younger—when they still had all of their cognitive capacities," Dobbs said. "What we're interested in is whether we can evoke [the patients'] interest in the program because of the familiarities of that program."

Alzheimer's disease is the most common form of dementia and currently has no cure. Symptoms of the disease include progressive memory loss, troubles with language and difficulties making decisions, and as a result of these effects, Dobbs hopes to determine which programs can be enjoyed by Alzheimer's sufferers.

"Individuals in long-term care facilities spend a considerable amount of time watching television, so we thought it would be interesting to find video programming that would be congruent to the individual's processing abilities," Dobbs said. "If we do, then we can enhance or improve their quality of life by showing them television programming that they can become actively engaged in."

Bob Heller, Associate Professor of Psychology at Athabasca University and co-principal investigator in the study, worked alongside Dobbs and U of A Sociologist Professor Laurel Strain. Heller began the project



KEEP IT SIMPLE Television can be a good pastime for Alzheimer's patients in care centres—but nothing too complex.

because he wasn't sure how TV was being used in long-term care facilities, and as a result, wished to pursue a more effective use for senior citizens.

"There's a lot of money that goes into children's programming. I'm thinking about shows like *Dora and Blue's Clues*, and if you read the credits, there's a lot of PhDs and sources that contribute to these shows," Heller

said. "As a group, seniors do watch and benefit from television, so perhaps they can soon retain some of that enjoyment in their declining years."

In addition to providing a form of escape for patients, Heller also hopes that the study might supply a bit of breathing space for those working in care centres.

"We're also thinking about caregivers

who are often giving care 24/7, and if there was specialized programming, it might be a bit of a respite tool for [them]," Heller said.

The study, funded by the Capital Care Group, was the first of a series of studies that began last summer. It finished in the fall of 2005 and the data collection was completed this past January.

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION: ASHLEY SCARLETT

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Lisa Volcomey  
Michael Vrolijk  
Wei Wang  
Jeanine Webb  
Andrew Weiss  
Kristopher Weiss  
Betty Jo Werthman  
Justin Wheeler  
Jennifer Whitner  
Graeme Woonatwhit

John Wiebe  
Norma Williams  
Rick Williams  
Tonya Wolfe  
Brenda Wulfeck  
Kristen Wurmann  
Carrie Ye  
Nicole Zuke  
Annette International Club  
Ancillary Services United Way  
Cookbook Committee  
Augustana Against AIDS Student Society  
Best Buddies  
Cross Fraternity  
Circle K Volunteer Club  
Corbett Clinic  
Delta Kappa Epsilon Fraternity  
Ismael Students' Association  
Liaison Hall Students' Association  
Phi Beta Phi Fraternity for Women  
Christian Tremblay  
Dorothy Turck  
Cordon Unger  
Kathleen Vail  
Nikki Van Dusen  
Lynn Van Rende  
Theresa Vanden Broek  
Erica Vargas  
Anna Vintrop  
Lisa Volcomey  
Michael Vrolijk  
Wei Wang  
Jeanine Webb  
Andrew Weiss  
Kristopher Weiss  
Betty Jo Werthman  
Justin Wheeler  
Jennifer Whitner  
Graeme Woonatwhit

The University of Alberta community members carry the university to the people *beyond these halls*.



## CAMPUS BRIEFS

Compiled by Edmon Rotea and Jake Troughton

### BUILDING UP THE BAY

With the downtown Bay building currently undergoing total redevelopment down to its concrete foundations to suit the University's needs, plans to construct an additional floor will be finalized this March.

The U of A's Board of Governors will meet on 17 March to determine the costs and plans of expanding the historical building.

If the board decides to proceed with the expansion, the fourth-story addition will increase the costs of the building to an estimated \$80 million, up from \$62 million.

The University first agreed to buy the historic building, which has sat mostly empty for more than a decade, last July, and finalized the deal in the fall.

Current redevelopment plans include the addition of windows above heritage façades, new atrium skylights, modernized office spaces and state-of-the-art laboratory facilities. The anchor tenant, the Research Transition Facility, is relocating to the third floor of the Bay Building as soon as 2007. RTF, managed by TEC Edmonton, a joint venture of the U of A and Edmonton Economic Development Corporation, is charged with helping commercialize research done at the U of A.

The RTF houses a variety of com-

mercial spinoffs and high-tech start-ups, with plans to accommodate more companies in the near future. If expansion plans are approved, the RTF may be a possible tenant for the new floor. The current location of the RTF, a former nurse's residence built in 1945, will be demolished to make way for the Health Sciences Ambulatory Learning Complex (HSAALC), which is expected to be completed by 2010.

### FINES FOR FOOD RETURNERS

Students with outstanding library fines may find that this is the best week to pay them.

Starting yesterday and running until Saturday, the University of Alberta's libraries and the Campus Food Bank are running their annual Fines for Food campaign. All fines paid for overdue books this week will be donated to the Campus Food Bank and the Augustana Campus Food Bank.

Last year, the campaign raised over \$600 for the two food banks.

### UNITED WAY SURPASSES GOAL

The University of Alberta was given a Leadership Award last week for its part in the United Way's fundraising campaign, helping the organization exceed its goal by over \$300,000.

On Thursday, the United Way of the Alberta Capital Region announced that it raised \$17.1 million last year, bettering its goal of \$16.8 million. The United Way is an umbrella organization that contributes to various charitable organizations in the Edmonton area.

The U of A's United Way campaign ran from 24 September to 18 November and raised over \$500,000.

## CAMPUS CRIME BEAT

Compiled by Mike Kendrick

### SAFARI GONE AWRY

On 15 February, two thefts occurred in the Zoology department of the Biological Sciences building. In separate incidents, cameras of the same make and model were taken from locked offices, with a total value of \$1,200.

Anyone with information is asked to contact Campus Security Services at 492-5252.

### A LEGAL GREEN AREA

On 18 February, officers responded to a report that the three occupants of a green four-door car parked near the Law building asked a group of passers-by if they "wanted to smoke up." When officers arrived, the prospective hot-boxers were found to be in possession of a small amount of marijuana, which was seized. The perps, identified as students, were given warnings; no charges are pending.

### THE FIRST RULE OF FIGHT CLUB IS ...

On 19 February, Campus 5-0 received reports of an assault in progress near the east side of the Dentistry/Pharmacy building. Officers rushed to the scene and quickly apprehended two drunken suspects. Upon questioning, it was discovered that the fight was mutually consensual between the parties, who were known to each other. They were released in the care of sober friends and no charges were laid. The males had no

University affiliation.

### SHADY DEALINGS

On 21 February, Campus Security was notified of a suspicious male and female loitering around the Arts lockers in HUB mall. Officers attended the area and found a male matching the provided description. He was discovered to be in possession of a small amount of crystal meth and a knife, and also had an extensive criminal record. The creeper was issued a provincial summons and escorted off campus to the Whyte Avenue area. His lady friend was not located.

### THIS ISN'T THE BON MARCHÉ

On 21 February, Campus 5-0 received a report that a 50-year-old male with a beard and green toque was wandering and talking to himself in the eastern part of the Physical Education building. Once located, he was determined to be intoxicated and explained that he was in the wrong part of the city. The raving derelict was escorted to the LRT station and left campus promptly. He had no University affiliation.

### THE CONTRABULOUS FABTRAPTION OF PROFESSOR HORATIO HUYNAGEL

A non-affiliated male was charged with trespassing on 21 February when he was found using U of A classrooms for private tutoring sessions. According to reports, the man was charging non-affiliated students for lessons in Tory and Education buildings over an extended period of time. The wannabe professor had been previously warned about his actions, and further, formal action was taken against his trespassing.

### QUESTION ANSWERED

Campus 5-0 observed a male acting strangely in the area of 88 Avenue and 112 Street on 21 February. After dancing around the sidewalk and talking to himself, the jovial stranger approached officers and demanded to know why he was being followed, insisting that they had "just dealt with him." He was arrested and turned over to Edmonton Police Services, where he was found to be in possession of a homemade weapon fashioned from a pool ball.

### I'M HERE FOR A LONG TIME, NOT A GOOD TIME

A suspicious male was observed near 110 Street and 89 Avenue on 22 February. He had previously been spotted loitering for an extended period near the University LRT station and initially waved at the 5-0 members in attendance. However, when it was determined that he was not affiliated with the University, he was questioned about his campus lurking habits. At first he refused to identify himself, giving a false name, and appeared to be under the influence of drugs. Officers directed the male off-campus to the Herb Jamieson Centre.

### OUT OF THE FRYING PAN, INTO THE FIRE

On 24 February, a local restaurant called to report a disorderly female wearing a hospital bracelet in the area of 112 Street. She had been recently discharged from University Hospital, and upon closer investigation, was discovered to be highly intoxicated. The problematic patient was escorted off campus to the Hope Mission and left in the care of staff for the evening. She had no University affiliation.

## STREETERS

The 2006 Winter Olympics ended on Sunday, and Canada posted its best results ever, bringing home 24 medals including seven golds.

What was your favourite moment of the Olympics?



Karen Urbanowicz  
Science II



Dan Nielsen  
Arts II



Julie Woodward  
UBC Grad studies



Greg Braun  
Phys IV

Probably the women's hockey. That was really good, I guess. I guess a lot of the girls won—we got a lot of girls from Canada that won medals. And we won a lot of speed skating. I guess the bad part is that the men's hockey didn't win.

Definitely not the Canada hockey team, that's for sure. I can't think of one specific thing that I liked. I guess the unexpected gold medals that people received, like the cross-country skier from Canmore [Chandra Crawford]; that was pretty good.

Aerials [skiing]. There's a guy from my hometown who got replaced for that team. Anyway, I just like watching it.

My favourite part of the Olympics was the hockey. Just watching all of it. I didn't care that Canada didn't win. I just like watching it for the hockey. Women's hockey was cool too, seeing that we won that. I'm disappointed that Canada didn't win for men's, but it was still a good final with Sweden and Finland.

Compiled and photographed by Dana Komperdo and Jake Troughton

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# Ovenbirds' seductive song drowned out by booming industry: study

University biological science student Lucas Habib uncovers mating troubles faced by Alberta's songbirds in the boreal forest

TRISTAN POLINSBEE  
News Staff

Alberta's oil and gas deposits have provided the province with the strongest economy in Canada. Exploiting those deposits, however, can have detrimental effects on the province's wildlife in unexpected ways, according to a study by a U of A Master's student.

For his Master's thesis in Biological Sciences, Lucas Habib and his team tracked and captured ovenbirds—a brown songbird named for oven-like nests they build on the ground—through Alberta's boreal forest, beginning in 2003. For three years, the study analyzed male ovenbirds' success at attracting a mate, which they serenade with a distinctive, high-pitched song.

**"There isn't a lot of space for them to move away from the noise, and I think that pattern could apply to other birds."**

LUCAS HABIB,  
ON OVENBIRDS

According to Habib, these songs are being distorted by gas pipeline compressor stations, which are common throughout Alberta's boreal forest.

"We found a notable discrepancy in mating success between the birds in noisy sites and the quiet sites, and there was also a change in the age structure," said Habib.

Male ovenbirds in areas nearest these stations were successful in attracting mates 77 per cent of the time, compared to 92 per cent success rates for those males in quieter areas.

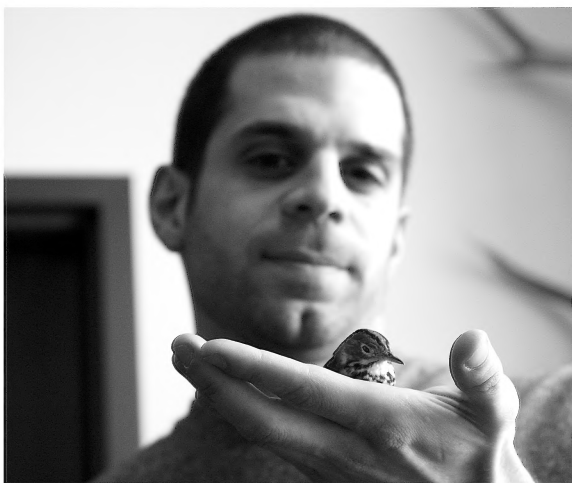
While one songbird's mating troubles may seem minor, Habib said that ovenbirds' sexual difficulties could indicate a wider effect on all birds that use songs to attract their mates.

"I think it's fair to extrapolate [these results] to other migratory songbirds; ovenbirds are highly territorial, and so are a lot of other ones. So they're setting up these territories, and they're packed pretty tight in there," said Habib. "There isn't a lot of space for them to move away from the noise, and I think that pattern could apply to other birds."

Compressor stations can be fitted with a muffling device that would reduce the noise generated, but currently, those mufflers are only mandatory on compressor stations close to human habitation. Those mufflers cost around \$10 000 each, according to Habib.

Habib originally intended to take his completed study to Alberta energy companies to advocate for voluntary participation in reducing the noise emitted by the compressor stations. He had no great hope of success at first, but then the media came calling.

The *Edmonton Journal* wrote an in-depth story on his work, and Habib was interviewed by the CBC on national radio. Since then, Habib has been contacted by representatives from the energy industry and the Alberta Government, who expressed interest in the results of his study, once it's completed.



PHIL HEAD

**NOTHING IN THIS OVEN** Lucas Habib holds one of his research subjects that's been experiencing mating problems.

"I don't think a lot of these people would have been interested in reading my work before, but now that the media has picked it up, they are. So there is some potential [for action]," said Habib.

Habib explained that the interest is especially gratifying considering the

difficulty he had in obtaining funding for a study that appeared less exciting to the energy industry than one focusing on hallmark species of the boreal forest, like wolves, grizzly bears or woodland caribou.

"When we first started this project, we wrote to [energy companies for

funding], and one of them wrote back to say, 'If you were doing caribou, then we'd give you funding,'" said Habib with a laugh.

Habib is currently writing up his thesis, which he will likely defend to the Department of Biological Sciences in April.

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# OPINION

opinion@gatewayualberta.ca • Tuesday, 28 February 2006

## King Ralph pays to twin Highway 63: Alberta's autobahn

TWENTY TWO PEOPLE IN FIVE YEARS. Apparently, that's the answer to what has been a longstanding rhetorical question in northeastern Alberta. The question? "How many people have to die on Highway 63 before it will be twinned?"

Last Thursday, Ralph Klein committed \$650 million to twinning the 279km stretch of highway from Grassland to Fort McMurray, in light of the growth of Fort Mac's oil sands industry. In his speech, Ralph went on and on about how important the oil sands are, saying that there has to be a safe route for industry to get to Fort McMurray—ch yeah, and people will stop dying now, too.

And just like that, everyone's problems have been solved. At least that's how it seems to anyone who hasn't spent time in Fort McMurray. While a twinned highway should translate to accidents with oncoming traffic becoming a thing of the past, there's still a serious problem that needs to be dealt with: the people on Highway 63 drive like asses.

As someone who grew up in the Fort, I can give you a plethora of close-call stories that involve one or more vehicles travelling at well over 150kph on Highway 63 that very easily could have ended with one vehicle being no bigger than a microwave. For as long as I can remember, the most insidious driving tactics have been commonplace on this road: passing in shoulders, over solid lines on an uphill slope, and if that isn't enough of a challenge, more than a few people like to do all of this while working on a case of beer (how else are you supposed to pass the time?).

If you've had the unfortunate task of driving to the Fort on a Sunday night, or out of the Fort on a Thursday afternoon, you know what I'm talking about. Cars end up travelling in packs, and when one lead-footed owner of a Ford F-350 gets behind the pack, he (or she) will fearlessly pull out onto oncoming traffic and see how many people they can pass before having to swerve back into their proper lane, almost creating another accident.

Accidents are nothing new to Highway 63. In addition to the 22 people who have died on the highway, over 250 have been injured. That averages out to one person every weekend for the last five years. Aside from accidents involving wildlife wandering onto the highway, most of these can be attributed to excessive speed. The only thing that has capped most drivers' atrocious practices on the highway is the possibility of a head-on collision, with that possibility removed, these same people will now feel invincible—this road is about to turn into an autobahn.

A few years from now, when the twinning is complete and driver fatalities are still racking up on Highway 63, maybe the root of these incidents will be tackled by a full-time squad of unmarked police cars that specifically target those who drive with no consideration for their lives or those of other people on the road. Until then, I'll be flying home like Christmas.

CHRIS O'LEARY  
Sports Editor

## Mmm ... sacrilicious

IDIOCY CLOSED THE CULTURAL GAP one more last week, as pastry chefs in Iran joined the cartoon-fueled battle against the infidels.

As if burning embassies and boycotting Havarti and Lego wasn't enough, the confectioners' union took a cue from the Republicans, and proclaimed that Danish pastries will now be known as "Roses of the Prophet Mohammed."

The new name doesn't really flow off the tongue. Maybe Anti-Freedom Pies would be more appropriate! Reviews in Tehran were mixed. Many were willing to make the sacrifice in the name of Islam, while others remained unconvinced, as they just wanted to eat the sweet, sweet danishes, whatever the name.

And, sexual connotations aside, doesn't it seem odd to protest depictions of the Prophet by naming a hot, flaky pastry after him? The Mohammad-shaped pastry would can't be far behind.

MATT FREHNER  
Photo Editor



## LETTERS

**David Suzuki doesn't deserve praise—he's nothing but a hypocrite**

What exactly is David Berry on? Praise for David Suzuki? I hope his little commentary was either sarcastic or merely praising his use of profanity, because any lauding of this man's ideas regarding the environment is misplaced (Re: "Suzuki: Fuck yeah!" 7 February).

Suzuki does a great job of being a wannabe know-it-all type who produces the largest amount of tripe designed directly for commercial consumption the environmentalist movement has ever seen. Whether you're the staunchest environmentalist or think that those environmentalists are tree-hugging hippies who should be used as mere fuel for the capitalist machine, there's no way David Suzuki should get any respect.

The guy is a pompous and arrogant man who uses the rhetoric of environment along with every advantage the society he supposedly hates gives him (including the SUV). Maybe he could become gainfully and legitimately employed in running the PowerPlant, however A freakin' buffet? Just get over yourselves, SU, and sell the thing to a company that knows how to run a bar/restaurant.

TJ KEIL  
Political Science IV

**Rossignol misses the mark—violence not the issue with cartoons**

Julie Rossignol's letter, "Religious satire not the same as Holocaust denial" (February 14), made a few

statements I completely disagree with. The Danish comics in question were not merely commenting on religious fanatics' use of violence.

The main reason these comics have been so inflammatory is the depiction of Mohammed. This generalizes that all Muslims are violent, and also attacks the core of their beliefs—that he is not to be depicted. Rossignol claims, "Having the freedom to make jokes about religion and politics is an important part of western secular culture." If this is so important, why isn't it alright to make jokes about the Holocaust? It is hypocritical to sanction one form of bigotry and not the other.

Additionally, I think it's a very poor conception of any culture to say it depends on belittling another. Islam dictates that the prophet Mohammed is not to be depicted, and apparently, western culture asserts its own right to mock religion and politics. This leads to a fundamental clash of ideologies. In direct conflicts, western ideology has no right to claim superiority. As the saying goes, one person's freedom ends when it begins to infringe on another's.

BILL RADFORD  
Arts IV

**Sports stars and Gateway editors giving frats a bad name**

The basketball article "I Totally Tapped That" (14 February) was not cool.

This year, you have decided to use some of my money to increase patriarchal attitudes towards women by retelling stories from some basketball jerks as if they were funny and cool. This pisses me off, because I'm sure that the male editor who created this article is the same person who turn around and criticize some-

one like me for being in a fraternity, as if I'm the one perpetuating a patriarchal society. But who's the one publishing stories that encourage the objectification of women?

It's the subtle attacks on women like the ones made in your article that endanger a fair society. So, I would like you to not use my money in this way, or at least admit that the editors of this paper are just jerks.

CALIB GRAMS  
Arts V

**You got it wrong, Lilwall—you obviously haven't had syphilis**

In response to the article on STDs in the recent sex issue ("STDs are everywhere, but which one's the best?" 14 February), I felt obligated to point out a factual error, though very likely an unintended one, by Scott Lilwall.

Pencilin, specifically benzapine pencilin, is actually used to treat syphilis—one STI that wasn't covered by the group—and is probably the only thing that Hitler, Beethoven and "Honest Abe" Lincoln ever had in common.

Now the Clap—aka that "pissin' razorblades" feeling—that sucker is treated with cefixime, a third-generation cephalosporin. And since I'm on the topic, I might as well add that Evan Smith didn't mention azithromycin as being the drug of choice to eradicate a Chlamydia infection.

For those of you having ventured off to warmer climates or Banff for Reading Week, you might wish you had clipped this column out and loaded up on condoms from the University Pharmacy. Wouldn't 25 cents have been worth not having swollen balls and green pus in your peephole for the guys, bloody discharge for the ladies, and burning

urination for everyone? Exactly.

RON VINOKOOR  
Pharmacy III

**The sex issue sucked**

I am appalled at the way this paper has decided to glamorize a sexual lifestyle by expending the already-offensive Purity Test issue into a full-blown sex issue. While this could have been a decent idea when approached correctly, the tone and the way the writers approach this issue was insensitive and immature. It is offensive enough normally to pick up this paper each week and to have perverse writers filling the pages with their crude "humour," but it's even worse when articles such as "I totally tapped that" or "I don't want to make love—I want to fuck" appeared in what is supposed to be a university-level paper. It is incredibly insulting to have our senses assaulted with sick musings or sex-crazed writers and to have it disguised as something educational.

While this is only the first Gateway sex issue, I hope this will be the last.

MARGARET CLAREY  
Engineering II

Letters to the editor should be dropped off at room 3-04 of the Students' Union Building, or e-mailed to [opinion@gatewayualberta.ca](mailto:opinion@gatewayualberta.ca).

The Gateway reserves the right to edit letters for length and clarity, and to refuse publication of any letter it deems racist, sexist, libelous or otherwise hateful in nature.

Letters to the editor should be no longer than 350 words, and should include the name, student identification number, program and year of study of the author, to be considered for publication.

# Cancelled flights and enemas—the joys of holiday air travel



JONN  
KMECH

Every school year, there's one week designated in which to do as little reading as possible. Hopefully, Reading Week allowed everyone to get a much-needed break from the rigours of Midterm Week. It did for me, but that was almost ruined thanks to the joyous stresses of air travel. Like an enema, air travel is painful, disgusting, dirty and not a hell of a lot of fun, but is an entirely necessary evil, either for travelling a long distance in a short time or getting an intestinal cleansing. And, like the accompanying colonoscopy, the ugliness of the entire experience goes pretty deep.

Travelling to New York for a family holiday, I first left Edmonton on a small Air Canada flight to Calgary. When I sat down, I noticed that I was surrounded on all sides by people reading *Maclean's* magazine, inciting me to put on my oxygen mask, and check for the closest emergency exits in case I was forced to jump. This initial observation did not bode well for the rest of my transit.

In Calgary, we groggily made our way to the American Airlines desk at 3:30am Saturday, getting there just in time to find out our flight to Dallas was cancelled. While technically due to the uncontrollable weather, it was still a major pain in the ass, since American somehow couldn't get us another flight to Dallas or New York until Monday. Luckily for us, the help-

ful airline worker got us a flight to Newark that same day on Continental Airlines. This turned blind air rage into minor anger over sleep lost. Compared to the seething masses behind me who weren't so fortunate to get a flight that day, I know I was lucky.

If humanity ever turned into walking undead who shopped duty free, it would be like observing the wandering souls in an airport waiting for delayed flights. Lost, confused and sluggish, these shells of human beings sit with eyes glazed over, rousing themselves occasionally only for coffee or human flesh. They can also be unpredictable, and become extremely pissed off without warning, as I would soon see.

**All I needed on my flight back was a noisy baby kicking my seat and a body cavity search, and I'd have most of the elements necessary for a wacky family-travelling comedy...**

After clearing customs and security, it became apparent that we weren't the only frustrated people at our gate. This observation was amplified by a lockdown of our section due to an alarm which sounded from some "unspecified threat" that was under investigation and was "neutralized" after a short time. Contributing to the tension an intercom told us that our plane hadn't arrived yet, caus-

ing a man to start yelling furiously at the intercom. In lockdown and amid chaos, we were finally able to get on the plane.

I got a window seat, which is usually a good thing, except the guy in front of me continually wrenched his seat back, crushing my laptop and driving it into my stomach. I prayed for a movie and a half-decent meal. I received neither, forcing me to actually open and read a book. After we arrived in Newark, we figured we could rejoice. Our holiday would finally begin. Not so, as the luggage carousel was delayed—for an hour and a half. All I needed on my flight back was a noisy baby kicking my seat and a body cavity search, and I'd have most of the elements necessary for a wacky family-travelling comedy starring Steve Martin and/or Chevy Chase.

Fast forward a week, and after a great holiday our flight back went a little smoother, despite two more half-hour delays. But now we were on American Airlines, and that alone was torture. Like gerbils, you're packed into small, rectangular boxes called "seats," and fed food pellets that, after paying \$400 to be on the flight, cost \$5 per box. That's right, they don't even give you a free biscuit or peanuts. And there's no movie either. We were reduced to reading the tetrille in-flight magazine or quivering in the fetal position, sustaining ourselves on tiny cups of orange juice. I chose the latter, and finally made it home.

Vacations are great, but getting there and back by air is hell. So next time you have to get anywhere (especially overseas), save yourself some hassle and drive. Better yet, get yourself a colonoscopy; it's good for your health and a lot more pleasant than dealing with the airlines.



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION: ROBIN COLUM

**I CAN'T BELIEVE I PAID FOR THIS** Air travel sucks, especially in the holidays.

## THE BIBLE IS BACK...



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# We're missing the leaping workforce

Leap years every year would boost the economy and Canadian spirit—really



ADAM  
GAULTMONT

Today is 28 February—nothing unusual about that. Tomorrow, *ipso facto*, will be 1 March—nothing overly exciting going on there, either. But it doesn't have to be this way: in other years, tomorrow would be the elusive date of 29 February, the glorious result of a "leap year." We last had one in 2004, and won't have one again until 2008! But with enough lobbying, Canada could become the first nation to celebrate leap years every year.

As it stands, leap years, or "intercalary years," for the three of you who know what that means, occur in every year divisible by four, except for century years, which have to be divisible by 400. But with my plan, leap years would only have to be divisible by one—and themselves, of course. For all you math majors reading

For one thing, this would result in way more "leaplings": that is, people born on 29 February. These crazy cats are only one quarter of their actual age! Just think about the potential of this for a minute: having a leap-year every year would in turn reduce aging problems in the work force, causing approximately 1/365 of all workers to stay at their jobs until they were 260 in human years, but only 65 in leap years, or, if you prefer, 455 dog-years. You follow? Yeah, me neither.

But this seems to be the attitude taken by the US Congress, which

voted last August to extend daylight savings time in the US by one month every year.

The idea behind this measure, which was part of the US's Energy Policy Act, is to conserve energy by allowing people to go longer into the evening without having to turn their lights on; but this forces the question: won't they just have them on that much earlier in the morning?

**But I say to hell with bovine biases and Newfoundlandic narcissism: we need unity amongst the people! And becoming a leading nation in leap-year advancement would be a great first step.**

This is not a new problem: in fact, Ben Franklin was already musing over it back in the '70s—the 1770s, that is—when he attempted to find ways of consuming fewer candles. His ingenious solution, proposed in his cheeky letter to the *Journal of Paris* in 1784, was much simpler, however: get up when the sun rises, and go to bed when it sets.

Now that the US has imposed yet another of their ideologies on the rest of the world, we must ask how it affects us here in Canada. Sure, optimizing daylight savings may be good for things like "facilitating relations with our largest trading partner," but

what happens if not everyone adopts the same system? Will I have to wake up earlier? Will my computer crash? What about flight schedules? What about TV schedules???

More importantly, this threatens to break up our fragile nation, still reeling from a divisive election and still attempting to stifle, to varying degrees of legality, the low, guttural rumblings of separatism. According to the Internet, rogue provinces Ontario and Manitoba have already announced that they are defecting to the US system, while Alberta and the always controversial Quebec are allegedly considering making the change as well.

It is for reasons such as these that Canada needs to unite, and ratifying my leap-year plan would be just the ticket. It would bring back into the fold provinces otherwise ostracized by the daylight savings debate: provinces such as Newfoundland, which operates on a crazy "half-hour past" system, or Saskatchewan, which chooses not to participate at all, just because it makes it easier to milk their cows. But I say to hell with bovine biases and Newfoundlandic narcissism: we need unity amongst the people! And becoming a leading nation in leap-year advancement would be a great first step.

But convincing Stephen Harper's newly elected government of this idea is no easy task: only a massive, organized effort clear across the country will get the suits in Ottawa to heed our call. Therefore, tomorrow, I call on each and every one of you to insist that it's 29 February, and that you're in fact only five years old. Processions will start at 9am in Edmonton, 11am in Toronto, and 12:30pm in Newfoundland.

# I have feelings—a sensitive man's lament



DAVID  
BERRY

It has recently come to my attention that, among the University community, I'm perceived as somewhat self-indulgent and flippant. Where I've earned this reputation is beyond me, but whenever I venture outside of my apartment (you know, the one with loud-sex neighbours and the full-length mirror) and actually try to talk to one of you, all I seem to get is people assuming that all I care about is myself. Why am I wasting perfectly good newspaper inches writing about my coworkers' drinking problems, you inevitably seem to ask me, when that space could better be spent discussing the obvious failings of trickle-down economics, or how shitty the food at RATT is? You know, valuable, hard-hitting campus journalism, the kind that would win awards, if such things existed.

Normally I let criticism from the plebeians melt away like so much retarded, incoherent morning dew, but there comes a time in every man's life when he has to draw a line in the uh, news... paper. Or something. Well, the point is, calling me a frivolous time-waster really hurts. Like poking me in the heart with a stick of pure hate and spiders.

I mean, I'm not one to show his feelings very often, but here I am,

"Sure, you find me funny, even attractive—but then you toss me aside like a jester who no longer amuses, a beautiful clown whose horn honks out of tune to your ears. But beneath this white makeup and devastating smile beats the heart of a man—a heart that doesn't wear makeup, or big, floppy shoes."

penning poignant studies into the human condition, searching for an ounce of immutable, personal truth in a world of postmodern guesswork and subjective stories, and I'm getting shat on by a bunch of barely literate morons who can't seem to see the higher motives behind an article entitled "I'm a sexy, underappreciated beast." Yes, of course, I had you—and three other university campuses—laughing at the wit of lines like "the interstellar pleasures of my ass," but did you not also see the wisdom behind a sophisticated and subtle parody of the tactics and techniques of modern dating? Evidently not.

Do you people think I'm just sitting here at 11am on Monday, still in my underwear, reading ten-year-old Dilbert comics and shitting out the first idea that pops into my head once I'm finished watching movie trailers online? Do you think I only write these things because under the terms of my employment I'm contractually obligated to fill this newspaper with a certain amount of copy, and I'm neither knowledgeable or motivated enough to find so-called "real" issues to discuss? Do you honestly, truly think I'm just a lollypopper who disguises his lack of point and originality with broad humour and ego-

sheltering self-reflexivity? For shame.

I've got news for you: beneath these nine-point fonts and sexy photographs, I am a man. A flawed, complicated, but ultimately beautiful man, with hopes and dreams and aspirations and personal failures and regrets and needs and all those things that make us each uniquely precious. Sure, you find me funny, even attractive—but then you toss me aside like a jester who no longer amuses, a beautiful clown whose horn honks out of tune to your ears. But beneath this white makeup and devastating smile beats the heart of a man—a heart that doesn't wear makeup, or big, floppy shoes. A heart that's broken.

So go ahead, misunderstand me, if you like. Fail to pick up on the subtleties of my writing, cast me aside, like you do with everything once it stops serving your purposes. But know that, for a brief while, you were in the presence of a star—a white-hot, spectacular heavenly body that burns with an eternal passion you can't possibly comprehend. Like that star, I'll still be glimmering off in the distance, shining my light for you while you point your telescope at other worlds, making your night sky just a little more beautiful, even though you ignore me. You ungrateful bastards.



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# Non-fiction isn't fact—read with care



NINA  
VARSWA

Suppose I tried to write a memoir—to build a coherent and convincing narrative out of a fragmented memory—but I screwed up a detail and someone proved its falsity. Am I now a fraud, a con artist? Because some of my details are untrue, does it mean that my whole story is a lie, and can I even know which details are fact and which are fiction if all I have to rely upon is my (imperfect) memory?

The current controversy surrounding James Frey's *A Million Little Pieces* is an ideal illustration of the absurdity of the unwavering fiction/non-fiction divide. Since an investigative internet site, "The Smoking Gun," disclosed evidence in January showing that Frey's best-selling memoir is bloated with fiction, the public and the media have been in a state of stunned outrage. Readers feel unlawfully duped by the book that was deceptively published as non-fiction, and are filing lawsuits against Frey and his publisher.

Oprah chose *A Million Little Pieces* for her book club in October, and publicly praised Frey's courageous and inspiring narrative. But after learning that Frey had wickedly manipulated the truth, Oprah was irate. She had him, as well as his Random House publisher, Nan Talese, on her talk show, where she confronted them with her indignation.

Reproaching Talese, Oprah stated that, "If you're publishing it as a memoir, I think the publisher has a responsibility, because as a consumer,

the reader, I am trusting you. I'm trusting you, the publisher, to categorize this book [appropriately]." However, Oprah also asserted that Frey's memoir "reads so sensationally that you can't believe all this happened to one person." Nevertheless, she took the narrative as gospel until she was presented with authoritative evidence to the contrary. Have some faith in yourself, Oprah; if something is stamped as fact but is entirely unbelievable, then maybe you should consider not believing it!

## If people actually take all non-fiction to be nonnegotiable truth, then it's a dangerous category indeed.

Oprah's reliance on authority exemplifies the public's blind and passive acceptance of what is said by those in power. When you're reading a memoir, a newspaper article, a history book or whatever, you have the right—and, I think, the responsibility—to say, "Wait a minute" when something seems questionable, even if the writer or publisher has greater "authority" on the issue than you. At all times, we need to approach critically what's presented as fact; if we don't, then we ourselves are at least partly to blame when we're duped by the authorities.

I've been shocked by readers' and the media's reaction to the discovery of fictitious elements in Frey's book. I have been led to feel that maybe the category of non-fiction has to be deconstructed entirely. If people actually take all non-fiction to be nonnegotiable truth, then it's a dangerous category indeed.

On Oprah's show, Talese wonderfully simplified the problematic nature

of autobiography when she said that she can't "get inside another person's mind." "Well, that's my point, Nan," retorted Oprah, "Otherwise then anybody can just walk in off the street with whatever story they have and say this is my story." Well that's the point of autobiography, Oprah. You're the only one who has the authority to write your own, and with respect to many of us, no one can ever really know whether you're lying or not.

It's ridiculous to demand that publishers investigate the minutiae of to-be "non-fiction" for its truth value. Non-fiction would never be published because the necessary investigations would be endless—and impossible.

Non-fiction has never been synonymous with truth. Once a moment of temporality is over, it can never be directly accessed, and the mediations of our memories are never infallible. However, I don't think this means that all "non-fiction" writing is illegitimate or dismissible. While one apparent solution would be to categorize all works with questionable details as fiction, this would quickly become absurd, as I can't actually think of any non-fiction that wouldn't include details that were questionable to someone.

We could dismantle the category of "non-fiction" entirely, but this would detrimentally clump together two categories that are, generally speaking, significantly distinct. Even if this distinction is shaky, instead, I think we should accept and be constantly aware that the fiction/non-fiction divide is blurry at best. If we see non-fiction for what it is—a reconstruction of imperfect memories and scattered records—then we can appreciate the light it sheds on the truth, while critically engaging with its often questionable content.

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## PAC proposal fraught with problems, uncertainty



ROSS  
PRUSAKOWSKI

If you watch TV, it's almost a given that you've come across the commercials late in the evening where preachers promise future salvation for just a small immediate contribution. Most of us have enough good sense to ignore the crackpots offering us a sweetheart deal that really isn't, and find other, more promising, ways to spend our time—like 1-900 party lines.

Alas, as the question on the Physical Activities Complex (PAC) in this year's Students' Union election shows, there are a few on campus who have taken to imitating this approach of offering "salvation." However, instead of trying to save our souls, they're trying to rescue our campus' shameful fitness facilities with a proposal. Unfortunately for them, it's a proposal that's so full of problems and unanswered questions that even their shilling evangelical brethren wouldn't try to sell it.

Sure, it takes only a single glance into the Van Vleet Centre to realize that the current fitness facilities on campus are in need of an upgrade, but in the big picture, making that happen is a trivial goal. One look around campus—especially the east side, where the arts buildings are clustered—shows that there are other, higher-traditional buildings that are central to the educational mission of the University that should be replaced first.

To ask students to shell out \$40 a year for up to 30 years to get a modern, comfortable version of Tony may be palatable. To ask students to finance the improvement of gym facilities that the majority of us don't use is lunacy. At least proposals like the Universal Bus Pass have some merit, as studies have shown that at least 40 per cent of students use transit regularly.

With this PAC proposal, the student-run Recreation Action Committee (RAC) and the Faculty of Physical Ed and Rec that pull their strings have publicly presented no reliable usage number or studies to offer us demonstrating that PAC is a good investment. Instead, all they've offered is an "if you build it, they will come" mantra that isn't worth \$36 million of student money.

No matter what the final cost of the building, the PAC proposal touted by the "Yes" side might not even be the building that we'll be asked to pay for. There are two reasons for this. The first is that, despite promises that students will have a spot on the advisory committee that runs the building, the representation won't be equal to the proportion of the funding students are providing, meaning that, even if students disapprove of something, they may not have the power to force change.

The second is that the committee will be toothless, anyway. Thanks to the structure of the University, the real power to decide what buildings will look like rests with the Facilities Development Committee, not the advisory committee. It has yet to approve PAC, and with a single decision, they could radically change the building from the one students voted

on to something completely different. In the end, this means that students are being asked to buy the caviar version of PAC when they might not even end up with white bread.

But even here students don't know how much they'll be required to pay. The question being put to us says the fee will remain in place for 30 years or until the costs incurred have been recovered. Yet the Faculty and RAC have given no indication of who will decide when the costs have been recovered, or if this will include the costs associated with establishing research space—something students shouldn't pay for. They've been content to ignore those questions, just as they've ignored ones regarding what will happen if the cost for PAC balloons to more than what students might have approved. This means that the premium PAC that students are voting on could very well lose features, and by approving the fee we could be saddling students with paying for it much longer than 30 years.

It would be easy and reassuring for us to just trust that the University will stop collecting the fee when everything's been paid off. However, the University's history on things like this is appalling, as students are still paying a "temporary" fee, approved to cover the cost of the Health Centre's renovation, more than two years after those costs have been recovered.

The "Yes" side may try to dazzle us with promised features and artists' renditions, but that's just an attempt to hide the lack of substance in the PAC proposal with some flash. Luring people in with empty promises might be acceptable for late-night evangelicals, but not for our own university.

# Do you want to change the world? Start by changing yourself



AMANDA  
TERMEER

While riding the LRT, a poorly dressed man screamed and fell to the ground. He began convulsing, clearly having a seizure. Everyone glanced over, and immediately looked away. I ended up holding his hand as people complained about the stall.

Earlier, I ran into a Whyte Avenue regular who claims to have been "somebody" once and refuses to take money from females because they "deserve to receive, not give." People were flicking pennies at his feet. When I asked him why he didn't go to a shelter, his eyes glistened bitterly. I gave him a hug, and he started to sob hysterically. He said, "No one likes to touch me anymore."

On an afternoon jog, I noticed a crowd of people laughing at a drunken Aboriginal man. He was struggling down some stairs near the High Level bridge. I offered him my help, and we headed to the University bus stop.

As a society, we spend a lot of time talking about how to help impoverished souls around the world. Millions

of dollars are donated, and most people thrive on the emotional high they get from being involved in some kind of charity. Nearly everyone has a cause, but we do little for those who need it here at home.

We give to organizations that help people in Africa and South America, but what about the starving homeless man down the street? What about the man having a heart attack on the bus?

We usually avoid getting involved with the people we "see" daily. Instead of being blind and walking around the less fortunate, open your eyes. Put yourself in the shoes of the homeless, the drunks and the noticeably disabled. Don't kid yourself and say it could never happen to you.

We often forget that no one is born homeless. Sometimes starving artists get to the point where they can't pay rent. Rising tuition and a set of bad circumstances could leave a former engineer wandering around the streets, wondering where he'll live. According to a study done in London, England, 15 per cent of homeless people have degrees—like you will in a few years.

We often forget that we have no control over our genetics when we see someone who's disabled. We never think it will be us. Neither did the homeless guy. Or the student diagnosed with multiple sclerosis.

Hours have been spent debating

issues regarding poverty, disabled people, and just about anyone who has a problem. The answer is quite simple: instead of wondering how to change the world, just become a better person.

Small acts of charity can improve anyone's day. Hand the hobo some change. So what if he buys a drink—wouldn't you want a drink in his situation? According to that same study, 45 per cent of people who spend the nights on the streets have been assaulted; 53 per cent of those assaults are committed by members of the general public.

Sometimes things that take only a moment can save a life. If someone looks distressed, don't just gawk—find out if you need to phone an ambulance instead of your therapist. Maybe smiling at a stranger will change their perspective on life and prevent a suicide. Next time a "problem" presents itself, do unto others as you'd have done to you. Henry Beecher, an affluent philosopher, said, "No man can tell whether he is rich or poor by turning to his ledger. It is the heart that makes a man rich. He is rich or poor according to what he is, not according to what he has."

Pretend to wake up drunk, to be homeless, in the gutter or having a seizure. Someone walks by, and rolls their eyes. You reach out only to be laughed at, or worse, assaulted. It doesn't feel so good on the other side, does it?



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION: PHIL HEAD

**PASSING ME BY** If you want to help others, you should start close to home.

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# SPORTS

sports@gateway.alberta.ca • Tuesday, 28 February, 2006

## Volleyball Bears flawless as they pick up another CW banner

ROSS PRUSAKOWSKI  
Sports Staff

For the past ten years, every men's volleyball national championship banner that CIS has handed out has ended up on west—the Canada West conference has simply dominated the rest of the country for the last decade.

With that fact in mind, the four best schools in the conference made their way into the Main Gym last weekend to crown a champion and nothing more, since the Bears and the visiting Saskatchewan Huskies, Manitoba Bisons and Trinity Western Spartans had all qualified for the CIS national championship in Hamilton next weekend. The fact that nothing other than play-off positioning was at stake forced some coaches to admit that it didn't make for great volleyball.

"You think about having already qualified, but I think we've got a pretty mature group," said Bears head coach Terry Danyluk. "A lot of them want to have a chance to repeat as Canada West champions. Winning our conference says a lot, because our league is a tough one to be in."

"I think it's hard to play in a tournament like this," said Manitoba Bisons head coach Garth Pischke after the Bears swept his team 3-0 on Friday night, leaving the Bisons to capture third place. "I don't think any of the teams get as fired up as they would have if it were a do-or-die situation, so I don't think we had the same desire as we did last weekend when we knew if we didn't play well we'd be done for the season. Getting into these non-elimination games now is a detriment for all of these teams, I think."

While the Bisons may not have been able to get all that fired up for the Canada West championships, it seems that the Bears had no problems gearing up for their competition. Coming into the weekend, Alberta had dropped just one match and 18 sets in 33 games this season and have looked unstoppable in their quest to repeat as CIS champions. The team moved a little bit closer to that goal after sweeping the third-ranked Bisons

on Friday, then repeating the feat against Trinity Western and grabbing their second-straight conference title on Saturday night.

"This was the last opportunity to play and it sets the standard for next weekend," said Danyluk. "[Gaining] the momentum going into next weekend is really important, so playing and finishing well is important, and I think gaining a mental advantage over other teams can never hurt you."

**"We played well, but you've got to understand that the Bears team is probably one of, if not the best, at least in terms of individuals that have ever played together on one team in CIS."**

RON PIKE  
HEAD COACH  
TRINITY SPARTANS

"If the Bears have a mental edge over us, they've already got it and we already know about it and it's becoming old—it's nothing new," conceded Ron Pike, the head coach of the Trinity Western Spartans, after losing to the Bears in straight sets for the second time this season. "We played well, but you've got to understand that the Bears team is probably one of, if not the best, at least in terms of individuals that have ever played together on one team in CIS."

With those words ringing in their ears, a number-one ranking in hand and the pressure that comes with being the favourites on their shoulders, the Bears head to McMaster University in Hamilton next weekend, hoping to have a CIS nationals as straightforward as the Canada West final four turned out for them.



LEANNE FONG

**MIDAS ON THE COURT** The Bears volleyball team defended their conference title on Saturday.

## Track Bears and Pandas continue to show improvement at Canada West meet



FILE PHOTO: NEAL WILDING  
**GOLD EFFORT** The Bears won the Canada West banner for the first time since 1993 this weekend.

CHRIS O'LEARY  
Sports Editor

Georgette Reed wanted her track and field athletes to make a statement about their program, and talk they did, as the Bears and Pandas chalked up first- and third-place finishes, respectively, at the Canada West championships this weekend in the Buttermere.

"People are stepping up; they're believing in our track program," Reed said. "Everyone knows we've got great hockey programs, a decent football program, good basketball and volleyball programs, but I think that people kind of think of track as being a bunch of all-comers."

The Bears and Pandas proved themselves to be as far from a throw-in team as they could possibly be this weekend. For the Bears, the Canada West banner is their first since 1993. While Reed was proud of her athletes' efforts, she was clear that a conference championship is only half of the battle.

"[The Bears' win is] awesome. It's what we've been working for since my first day here. We're not done yet though, we've still got CIS championships," Reed said. "This is just the first step. These guys have what it takes to go all the way if they just keep believing and take this as a step and not the final destination."

The Bears trailed the University of Saskatchewan Huskies by 16 points as the second day of the competition began, but dominant Saturday performances from Alberta's men made the difference, as the Huskies literally couldn't keep up with Bears. Sprinters Neville Wright (6.70 seconds), Antoine Boussoombo (6.95 seconds) and Ryan Adams (6.96 seconds) swept the 60m event. With Mark Cocks thrown into the mix, the Bears then destroyed the competition in the 4x200m relay in a time of 1:28.26. Reed

thought that her sprinters, Wright in particular, may have just gotten started over the weekend.

"Neville, I don't think we've even seen his peak potential yet. It was nice to see him run as well as he did," she said. "I still don't think that we're even close to our potential. Hopefully at nationals we can get there and see what happens."

Thrower Matt Doherty stayed well ahead of his competition as well, as he put forth a CIS-best 16.82m in the shot put, to go with his Friday first-place 18.26m in the weight-throw. Reed implied that Doherty could top his impressive display at nationals.

"Matt stepped up and did really well [on Saturday]. He did okay in the weight throw, but [on Saturday] he really pulled through in the shot put. He beat a school record by 40cm, and I'm really happy for him."

On the women's side of the track, first-year Panda Carline Muir proved to be untouchable, picking up gold medals in the 60m and as part of the 4x200m and 4x400m. Muir was happy with how her first Canada West meet turned out.

"I had a great weekend," she beamed. "I came here to do what I wanted to do and I did everything that I was supposed to. It's a good feeling."

"[Muir] did an awesome job. Our women stepped up amazing this weekend," Reed noted. "We thought we had a good program last year, but this year it's risen because we got some key people. Our female sprint program has gone up five levels from where it was last year."

Muir agreed with her coach, however, and said that while it was nice to win some medals against the conference's best, the team's work isn't done yet.

"We've been [focusing on nationals] since the beginning of the year and we're going to continue doing that until this thing's over. We're looking forward to doing really well at nationals."





**PROPS TO THE LITTLE GUY** He may look undersized on the court with players up to a foot taller than him on his team, but fourth-year libero Justin Wong (left) provides the defensive glue that holds the top-ranked Bears together.

## Justin Wong the calm to volleyball Bears' storm

Fourth-year Golden Bear dynamo named Canada West Libero of the Year by rival coaches; preparing for leadership role on next year's talented squad

ANDREW RENFREE  
Sports Staff

When some of the strongest power-hitters in CIS volleyball jump up and spike the ball over the net, Golden Bear Justin Wong is usually the first person to jump in the line of fire. Blocking, diving, passing and quick defensive digs are just part of a regular day on the court for Wong, the Bears' libero for the last four seasons. His knees take a beating, but his selfless efforts allow Alberta's setters and hitters to put points on the board.

"Liberio is a little bit different from other positions, because there are really only two aspects: defence and passing," said Wong, adding that he loves both elements of the position. "I love the defensive side of the game because it's that satisfaction of knowing that you can stop the other team and frustrate them."

Frustrating opponents seems to be Wong's forte this year, as he's averaged 1.61 digs per set on the season. At 5'9", he is dwarfed by his teammates, but his big plays over the season have earned him the title of Canada West Libero of the Year. Wong was modest about the award, putting team accolades ahead of personal ones.

"I found out Friday, and I was honestly surprised. I don't think about that stuff too much, because for me and the 16 other guys on this team, the most important thing is

the national championships at the end of the year. [The award] is nice to have, and it's definitely icing on the cake, but it's only that if we win nationals."

**"I think he brings a calm intensity to the court. He's consistent and emotionally, he's a brick wall. He makes those game-savers and highlight-reel digs; he's a great guy to have on the court."**

**BROCK DAVIDIUK,  
BEARS SETTER,  
ON JUSTIN WONG**

While "Wonger," as his teammates call him, was downplaying his recognition, his teammates and coaches were certain he was deserving of the award.

"I think he brings a calm intensity to the court. He's consistent, and emotionally, he's a brick wall," teammate Brock Davidiuk said. "He makes those game-savers and highlight-reel digs; he's a great guy to have on the court."

Danyluk attributes Wong's success

to his level-headed personality and consistency.

"Justin has been a consistent presence since day one. His numbers aren't real high in comparison to some of the other liberos in the country, but he has a calming presence; his personality is consistent and I really believe that that's important."

There are five Bears graduating this season, which means that Wong will have to step into a leadership role next year. Danyluk felt that Wong will be up to the challenge, while Davidiuk agreed that Wong has great leadership potential, despite the fact that, according to CIS rules, liberos can't be named as court captains.

"You don't necessarily have to be a captain to be a leader on this team," Davidiuk said. "Next year he'll be someone that young players can look to, to see how you're supposed to act as a player."

Davidiuk added that Wong's on-court abilities are tremendous, but he boasts a number of off-court attributes that to many may not be as obvious.

"When I think about what makes players great, I think about a lot of intangible things and what he brings to the court is definitely something intangible. It's those things like hard work, emotional stability and that teammate presence out there. It's been a pleasure playing with him."

## Canadian Landmine Awareness Week

Canadian Landmine Awareness Week runs from 27 February to 5 March. Answer the one of the following landmine-related and you could win a prize!

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# Hockey Pandas take Canada West banner the hard way

Women's hockey squad perseveres through late Bisons rally and wins in OT enroute to their fifth-consecutive conference banner

JAKE TROUGHTON  
Senior News Editor

With the Canada West women's hockey season over, it's now official: the Pandas just don't dominate the conference like they used to.

Instead, they're dominating it like their Golden Bear counterparts do. All in all, it's not a bad place to be. Sometimes they win by a lot; more often, they win by a little. Sometimes they even tie. But they almost never lose, and as of this weekend they've won five Canada West championships in a row (just like the Bears).

The games have been a lot closer, and their 20-1-3 regular- and post-season record is a little off of the 24-0 of the previous two years, but the Pandas are still the team to beat in the Canada West conference. They beat the Manitoba Bisons 5-4 on Saturday to win the conference final series two games to none in a game that, somewhat fittingly, required overtime after the Bisons charged back from 3-0 and 4-2 deficits.

"It feels a lot better than an 8-1 win," Pandas head coach Howie Draper said after the game. "It feels like a real hockey win. In the past three years, we always knew what the outcome would be. When the outcome's uncertain, I think the reward is more special."

Left winger Taryn Barry, who scored the banner-clinching goal with 15 seconds left in the first overtime period, agreed that this year's win was a little sweeter than past years.

"There's no comparison," she said. "We worked our butts off for this. People can say we're not as good as the



**GRINDING IT OUT** Canada West's Player of the Year Kristen Hagg and the Pandas hockey team went to overtime and survived against the Manitoba Bisons.

team last year, but we're winning and we're a strong team."

While the Pandas were still favoured to repeat as conference champs heading into this season, their success has surprised many who expected to see a bigger drop-off after the team lost several key players after last season, including CIS career-scoring leader Danielle Bourgeois. Bisons head coach Jon Rempel said the Pandas did feel

a little more beatable this year, but added that he's impressed by how well they've maintained their strength.

"They don't have the firepower that they've had in the past in terms of just being able to take over a game, but they're still a good hockey team, and very well-coached," Rempel said. "I think Howie did an excellent job after losing as many players as he did."

Along with a conference champion-

ship banner, the Pandas' series sweep of Manitoba, which included a 3-1 win on Friday, earned them a berth in the CIS championship tournament 9-12 March at St Francis Xavier University in Nova Scotia.

"This was one of the most exciting and rewarding Canada West finals we've won," said blueliner Kristina Kother, one of four Pandas who played their final home game before gradu-

ating after this season. "Overtime is nerve-wracking, but when you win in overtime, it's that much better."

Centre and captain Kristen Hagg, who graduates as the second-leading scorer in CIS history, shared similar sentiments to her teammates.

"It's almost the perfect way to go out," she said. "It's nice to have that kind of excitement and feel that great about a win."

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# Sports' jerks, heroes and goats: the Gateway's Torino



GATEWAY  
SPORTS STAFF

Group  
Commentary

Once every four years, Canada plays its collective ass on the couch to sit back and enjoy its favourite sporting competition, behind the Stanley Cup playoffs: the winter Olympics. While the obvious (Canada's seventh-place finish in men's hockey) comes to mind for many, here's what left an impression on the Gateway's sports staff.

## Ross Prusakowski

For many, the day of 22 February in this Olympics will be defined by a single event, and I can proudly say that the same is true for me as well. However, while most of the rest of the country were already demanding a royal commission be established to find out what happened to the men's hockey team's ability to score, I was enthralled with a performance on another ice surface.

The sportsmanship displayed by Kristina Groves when her teammate Cindy Klassen knocked her off the top of the podium and turned her gold medal into silver in the 1500m long track speed skating were a refreshing demonstration of what the Olympics are supposed to be all about. Groves understood it was a big moment for Klassen and Canada, and pushed aside whatever disappointment she had and was gracious in defeat. For her part, Klassen brought her teammate into the moment as much as she could and played up the achievement it was for Canada at the expense of her own personal triumph and glory.

Everyone else can bemoan the failure of the men's hockey team; they didn't show any of the sportsmanship or dedication that paced Groves and Klassen to their podium finishes anyway, and the overpaid NHLers should have felt honoured just to share the spotlight with them.

## Brian Ramchandar

The Olympics are supposed to be about sportsmanship, passion and the triumph of the human spirit. However, my favourite moments of the games involve none of the three—in fact, the exact opposite characteristics are what I will remember most about the train wreck that was the American Olympic Team. While most other countries carried themselves with grace, dignity and pride, the United States managed to come across like a group of spoiled, arrogant whiners whose failures brought joy and happiness to the many of us not ruled by George W. Bush.

The women's snowboard cross

event gained notoriety in its Olympic debut as Lindsey Jacobelli attempted showboating before the finish line landed her on her red, white and blue ass and cost her what should have been an easy gold medal. Downhill skier Bode Miller, touted prior to the games as a medal favourite, left 0-5 (with a DQ and two DNFs to boot) and reportedly spent more time drinking at the Irish Igloo than preparing for his races. Aerial skier Jarret Peterson was sent home to the good ol' US of A days before the closing ceremonies after getting in an altercation following a late night of partying. And even NHLer Mike Modano, who was benched for most of the third period in the Americans' quarterfinal loss, openly criticized the entire US hockey program and then skipped the final team meeting. Granted, these incidents don't reflect on the team as a whole, but it still brings a smile to my face knowing that Canada, with one-tenth the population, finished only one medal behind the Americans, and did so without putting on a soap opera in the process.

## Jake Troughton

Almost no one gave the Swedish women's hockey team any chance of beating the Americans. Even those of us who thought they could win didn't think they actually would do it. But by the end of the semifinal match between the two teams, I was cheering for Sweden harder than I've cheered for any team in my life, and I've never been happier to be wrong.

Sweden's 3-2 semifinal shootout win has drawn obvious comparisons to the 1980 "Miracle on Ice" American men's victory over the USSR, but it was no miracle. It was a simple case of an underdog team figuring out where they could beat the opposition, and working damn hard to pull it off.

They started shaky and fell behind 2-0, but after Maria Rooth scored six minutes into the second period, the Swedes were not only back in the game—they were the better team. They shut down the admittedly superior US offense with powerful defence and the dominant goaltending of Kim Martin, arguably the best goalie in the world. You can hardly ask for more from the Olympics than a team fighting at just the right time to accomplish something they'd never done before.

## Andrew Renfroe

For Canada, the Olympic Games in Turin will go down as one of the greatest in our history. Before the torch was lit, the Canadian Olympic Committee had predicted that the Canucks would place third in the medal standings, with a total of 25 medals (an increase of eight from Salt Lake City). Canada only fell shy of that goal by one, notch-

ing 24 medals and third-place overall. With so many great Canadian Olympic moments, as well as some spectacular ones from other nations, it's hard to pick only one that stands out.

Personally, one of my favourite moments was when Brad Gushue and his curling squad from Newfoundland captured the gold medal over Finland. The Finns came off strong, scoring two in the first end, but the Newfies didn't falter and quickly answered with two points of their own in the second. Canada stole single points in the third and fourth ends and Finland scored one in the fifth, making it a close 4-3 game. The CBC's frequent images of nervous Newfoundlanders who had been given the day off of school and work, watching the game in pubs and curling rinks across the province only added to the viewing tension. The sixth end was one of the more exciting moments of the Olympics, as the Gushue foursome scored a massive six points, putting the Finns out of contention. Finnish skip Markku Uusipaavalniemi admitted defeat in the eighth end, giving the Canucks the victory. I swear I could hear people in St. John's cheering, but that also could have been the guys working on the rigs in Fort McMurray. Now they can all relax and enjoy a glass of scotch.

## Chris O'Leary

Although the winter Olympics are undoubtedly exciting and an addictive watch, nothing has been more captivating to me than the chaotic fallout that has resulted from the men's hockey team and their astonishingly low seventh-place finish in Torino. As I work my way through this, fully realizing that Don Cherry and the hockey police could come and try to revoke my Canadian citizenship at any minute, I'll go ahead and make an announcement that very well could shake this country to the core: I'm not a hockey fan. At all. I can watch it and root for Canada, but when it comes down to it, the Steve Francis-to-New-York-trade was what I'm going to remember more than anything else from 22 February.

That's not to say that the absolute state of panic that everyone else has been in for the last six days hasn't fascinated me. Not since the terrorist attacks of 11 September, 2001 can I recall being able to turn on the radio or TV and be able to find someone talking about the gravity of the situation that is now upon us a week after the fact. Sports radio and Canadian newscasts have been absolutely dominated by talk of the ineptness of our powerplay and whether or not Wayne Gretzky would step away from the team that he created and struck gold with in 2002. For me, the aftermath of our international lowliness on the rink will overshadow anything else in Italy. Even Sasha Cohen.

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# Pandas' Konihowski claims silver medals in volleyball, track and field

CHRIS O'LEARY  
Sports Editor

With four U of A teams in the thick of the hunt for their respective Canada West championships this past weekend, Janna Konihowski was the only athlete who came away with a medal from more than one Pandas team.

On Thursday night, Konihowski was in Vancouver, where she had a game-high 26 digs against Trinity Western University and helped her Pandas volleyball teammates turn a 0-2 deficit into a 3-2 win and a berth in the gold medal game on Friday against the University of British Columbia. She got up Friday morning and flew back to Edmonton, where she threw a personal-best 12.98m in the shot put, which garnered her a silver medal in the competition and a spot at the CIS national championship from 9-11 March. She said that although both events were a day apart, keeping her focus on each one wasn't difficult.

"I tried to keep it very separate," she said. "After [the volleyball game], I started to get more nervous because I hadn't practiced shot put all week. But my mental preparation was good so I came back and I was ready to go. It was separated really well."

This season, Konihowski's fifth in CIS, started with her deciding to focus solely on the shot put, after spending the four previous years playing libero for Laurie Eisler on the Pandas' volleyball team. Her departure was short-lived, however, after she was talked into coming back to join the volleyball team in January by Eisler.

"Janna's shot so much into the program," Eisler said. "She's been with us since 2000, so we knew exactly

what we were getting with her. She's a very good leader, a great player, and we knew she'd help the team on the court."

Konihowski said that without the compromise of both Eisler and track and field head coach Georgette Reed, her return to the court wouldn't have been possible.

"[Reed and Eisler] are both really good about it. Like if I miss a video session for volleyball I can make it up at a different time. The practice times for both teams work out for me; it's been really good."

As flexible as both coaches have been for Konihowski this season, this weekend's events were not something that could be rescheduled. As a result, while she was earning a spot in the track and field nationals on Friday, she had to miss out on her teammates' gold medal match against UBC—where the Pandas were soundly thumped in straight sets.

"It was hard, but from the beginning I knew that that was going to be how it would be," she said. "It helped to know that all the teams at Canada West qualified for nationals anyways. And I really trust in [second-year libero] Jodi Priesen. It was hard to leave, but I had to do it."

"When we talked at the beginning of the year about her going back and helping out with volleyball, I told her, 'Whatever makes you happy,'" said Reed. "But she said she wanted to make sure that she was back for this weekend to try to qualify for nationals. And I told her we'd do whatever it takes. And Laurie Eisler, hats off to her. We worked together and Janna went and helped them on Thursday night and got them to the gold medal game and she came here and got the silver



SILVERS ONE WEEKEND, GOLDS THE NEXT? Panda Janna Konihowski (left) is heading to nationals for two sports. FILE PHOTO: PETER

medal on her own and qualified for national championships for shot. She's still got so much potential there, too."

Konihowski admitted she was a little surprised to throw so well, after

not practicing and traveling so much in such a short span of time.

"My first throw felt horrible. After they measured it I was like, 'Wow, if that's horrible, imagine what it'll be like

when it feels good.' That's really exciting, because there's two more weeks [before nationals] and I know I can throw farther and I think I can medal at nationals if I continue like I have."

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All terms run from 1 May 2006 to 30 April 2007. The full-time paid portion of the job runs from mid-August to the end of April. Four issues of the Gateway will be produced over the summer months. All line editors will be expected to train on at least two of the four summer issues (unless granted leave by the hiring committee) for an honorarium of \$100/issue. In their full-time capacities, the salaries for each position are as follows: Managing and Senior News will receive \$1500\* per month; all other line editors will receive \$1185\* per month. Please note that candidates may apply for no more than two (2) positions, except by special dispensation of the Line Editor Selection Committee. Applicants should submit a covering letter, resume and portfolio to Gateway Business Manager (Steve Smith, 492-6669, [biz@gatewayualberta.ca](mailto:biz@gatewayualberta.ca)) by noon on Friday, 10 March 2006. Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted for interviews.

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## Olympic men's hockey: you didn't see it coming?



NICK  
FROST

Sports  
Commentary

22 February, 2006 will certainly be a day forever etched in the history of Canadian sport, and remembered by the patriotic masses glued to the seemingly never-ending CBC Olympic coverage. However, if you're thinking that people will recall that day, say, a year from now, and talk about Canada's outstanding four-medal haul (including gold-medal performances from Cindy Klassen and Candace Crawford) and how we broke the original Canadian record of 17 medals at a Winter Olympics, you'd be wrong, my friend.

People will, instead, think back to that day and remember how our men's hockey team's poor performances culminated in the form of elimination by the always-pesky Russians. When your countrymen get their asses handed to them in the sport they are best known for, on the biggest stage in the world, hell, you'd be pretty quick to disregard a shitload of speed skating medals, too. In the eyes of a great number of Canadian faithful, our national hockey heroes let us down and ultimately, they confirmed what some of us already knew: this team was about to fail.

Right off the bat, people are going to be quick to jump on Wayne Gretzky for putting together a lacklustre team, myself included. Despite keeping with the template that earned them victories at the 2002 Olympics and the 2004 World Cup, no amount of team chemistry or defensive forwards could have saved Canada's ass this time around; everyone knew what Canada

was bringing to the table and adjusted their playbooks accordingly. Some of the Eurotrash teams even re-implemented the infamous trap defensive system, pre-sucking the life out of any potential Canadian attack.

**When your countrymen get their asses handed to them in the sport they are best known for, on the biggest stage in the world, hell, you'd be pretty quick to disregard a shitload of speed skating medals, too.**

Canada's biggest issue this year, above all others, though, was goal scoring. If you can't score, at all, in half of your games (even against motherfucking Switzerland), you have a gargantuan problem on your hands. It didn't seem to matter to Gretzky, however, that some of the players chosen were having mediocre seasons; keeping the same core group of guys together, for chemistry, or nostalgia, or whatever reason, seemed more like their main focus. Several of Canada's go-to-guys, including Jarome Iginla, Martin St. Louis and Rick Nash, weren't lived up to previous numbers with their respective NHL clubs, and the selection of Kris Draper was just baffling (and don't give me any of that "defensive forward" crap, either).

A lot of other players could have had a better chance of bulging twine in Torino, had they been given the opportunity. Most blatantly passed up was Carolina Hurricanes' forward

Eric Staal: when someone is third in NHL scoring, playing on the NHL's best team, and has size and youth on his side, typically, you don't relegate him to the taxi squad—he should probably be your number-one centre.

Another reason for Canada's letdown was an uncharacteristic brand of sloppy, undisciplined play. On numerous occasions, Canada had defencemen making dangerous, long, stretch passes for desperation scoring opportunities, players trying to make cute plays on the larger ice surface, and incoherently stupid penalties (Todd Bertuzzi, you cost your country the game against Russia). There was just no source of motivation driving them; even the incentive of winning a gold medal didn't seem to arouse their spirits.

Gretzky deserves a little bit of slack, though. When he said that the gambling-ring scandal he was allegedly involved in that emerged a week prior to the games wasn't going to become a distraction to the team, he was right. There was absolutely no mention of said scandal, at any time during the actual tournament, from press or players alike. Really, though, that makes Canada's misfortunes seem more pathetic. At least if it had been somewhat of a distraction, the players could have used it as a convenient excuse to downplay some of their shitty performances.

Canada must now re-assess their mistakes and hopefully get back to having the mentality to pick a team similar to that of the Salt Lake Winter Olympics. It's unclear, at this point, as to whether Gretzky will be back as executive director of the team when the Olympics hit home ice in 2010. All we can say for sure at this point is that the pressure to perform in front of the raucous, overtly patriotic Canadian hockey fans will be insurmountable. Maybe that'll give team Canada something to play for.

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## Canuck paraphernalia under the ice is underhanded



ROBIN  
COLLUM

Sports  
Commentary

Alright, so I know that it isn't quite the same as injecting yourself with human growth hormones, or your own refrigerated blood (seriously, ew!), but I can't help but feel that the Canadian Olympic team has been, well, cheating.

For the 2002 Winter Games in Salt Lake City, Edmonton icemaker Trent Evans was hired to create the playing surface at E Centre, which hosted both the women's and men's hockey events. Hoping to make the rink a little more like home, I guess, he buried a loonie at centre ice.

As we all know, both of our hockey teams brought home gold medals that year, and at the press conference after the men's final, Wayne Gretzky revealed the ice's secret. Evans had told both teams what he'd done at the beginning of the Games, and it supposedly inspired the players to greater heights of hockey excellence. After their win, the women had to keep themselves from kissing centre ice.

Last week, when all of the long-track speed-skating events had wrapped up in Torino, it was revealed that again, a Canadian icemaker had added a patriotic extra to the ice. This time it was Calgary's Mark Messier.

who had placed a solid gold maple leaf pin under the finish line at Oval Lingotto.

A loonie was also buried in the sheet of ice used for the gold-medal curling match, which was won by Canada's Brad Gushue rink.

**When you're near the end of your race, and your legs hurt so much that you don't know if you can stay on your feet, let alone finish the race, it's your brain and not your muscles that keep you going.**

On the one hand, these were genius moves. The psychological aspect of athletic success is often underestimated, but it is as important to have your mind set for success as it is to be in top physical condition. When you're near the end of your race, and your legs hurt so much that you don't know if you can stay on your feet, let alone finish the race, it's your brain and not your muscles that keep you going.

So, anything that you think will give you a little extra boost of luck will help. In fact, the Oval Lingotto maple leaf belonged to, and was installed on the advice of, Clara Hughes' sports psychologist. Hughes won gold in the 5000m race.

The International Olympic

Committee said that they don't have a problem with the practice, according to the Canadian Press. They said that they'll only have to take steps if it gets "out of hand" or interferes with their "clean-sense policies."

Nonetheless, I can't help but be uncomfortable about the whole thing. The Olympics are supposed to be about equitable, honourable competition. Why should Canada get an advantage over everyone else?

"There was a little bit of subterfuge here, I had to do it at night with nobody else around," Messer told the CBC. If you have to wait until late at night when there's no one around, there's probably something wrong with what you're doing.

And yet, everybody has been exceedingly proud of all this, slapping themselves on the back for getting away with it. There's been a children's book made about the Salt Lake loonie, and the Royal Canadian Mint issued a special commemorative dollar coin just in time for this year's Games.

I am not being unpatriotic, I swear. I am as proud of Canada's medalists as the next girl, but now, my pride is tinged with a little bit of embarrassment.

I can't help but look at this from another country's perspective. If the American team had won eight medals on a track that contained a little star-shaped banner, Canadians would be writing furious letters to the editor, calling it unfair and contrary to the spirit of the Olympic Games.

And I can't help but think that they'd be right.

## The Trew spirit of rock and roll, straight from the East



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ALEX BAILEY

Arts & Entertainment Writer

Calling yourself the hardest working band in rock and roll might also be one of rock's biggest clichés, but for the Canadian quartet The Trews, they might just have earned one of music's dubious titles. Having played an estimated 400 shows in the last two years, the Trews are once again on tour, maintaining their hard-working status and promoting their sophomore LP, *Den of Thieves*.

Composed of brothers Colin (vocals, rhythm guitar) and John Angus Macdonald (lead guitar), along with their cousin Jack Syperek (bass) and friend Sean Dalton (drums), the group has managed to break out of the standard rock mould with *Den of Thieves*, going more experimental with their musicianship than they did on their first record, 2003's *Home of Ill Fame*. According to the band, after their first recording effort they started to feel not only more at home as a band, but also more comfortable with their sound.

"This one is a little more like us," explains Dalton. "It's a little more all over the map, instead of just being a straight-ahead rock record. We all threw in our two cents and did what we wanted to do. We're not a one-sided group; there's some slow stuff there, and there's some Scottish-influenced music on there too."

Indeed, a fair number musical elements have been added to the new album, including horns, strings, harmonicas and even a banjo. Much of it was the idea of renowned music producer Jack Douglas, who has worked with the everyone form the The New York Dolls to Jimi Hendrix and John Lennon. Dalton insists that while Douglas encour-

aged them, these new influences were added at the discretion of the band.

"He's a hell of a good producer and a great guy," says Dalton. "He really let us go off and explore, and do our own thing and he just captured it. There were really no limits, which was good for us. It allowed us a chance to express ourselves."

This expression comes shines through most dramatically in their three music videos, for "So She's Leaving," "Poor Ol' Broken Hearted Me" and most recently, "I'm Not Ready To Go" and most all produced by Stephen Scott (Shaggy, Love Inc). Dalton asserts that the collaboration with the Scott is crucial for his image.

"He sees a side of us that's there, but that we can't always display to the audience. We're a rock and roll band, and we do like to read, we do like kind of strange, artistic books. He's a reader, he's an artistic guy, and he likes to do really strange movies, so I think us and him work really well together."

Branching out can be a dangerous move in the early stages of stardom, especially when you're success has been marked by such honours as winning the Most Played Rock Song for "Not Ready To Go" at the Canadian Rock Radio Awards in 2004. As far as their fans are concerned, however, this technique seems to be working for them. The Trews are up for five East Coast Music Awards, tied with Matt Mays and El Torpedo for the highest number of nominations.

Heading to the States for their next tour, Dalton admits that although he thinks they're ready for the US, it will take time starting all over again.

"It's like going back to square one. We just finished a mini-tour in the States and nobody knew who we were, nobody was automatically clapping. We had to work for it. I don't think you can really get the full effect until you actually come to see the band live. We're loud, we're pretty exciting, and we're jumping all over the place."

## Guys and Dolls, they're just a bunch of crazy guys and dolls

Despite stumbling over onstage chemistry, Citadel Production still manages to save itself with an elaborate setting and fun story

### Guys and Dolls

Directed by Robb Paterson

Based on the story by Damon Runyon  
Starring John Devorick, Mairi Robb and Gordon Tanner  
Citadel Theatre

AMANDA ASH

Arts & Entertainment Staff

It's no surprise that the classic Broadway musical *Guys and Dolls* evokes the optimism it does in audiences. The play boasts glittering showgirls, an extravagant set and, most importantly, a number of lovable characters just itching to dazzle their way onstage. The only problem with producing such a timeless piece, however, is being able to successfully conquer those high expectations. And unfortunately, for the Citadel's current production of *Guys and Dolls* the bar has apparently been set a tad too high.

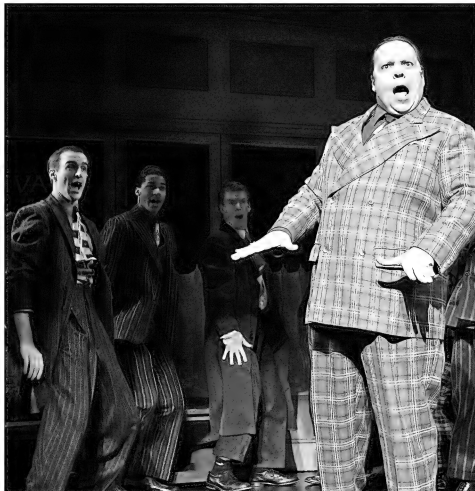
Although the flashy costumes and neon lights create an enticing atmosphere of sinful pleasure, they just aren't enough to hide the play's absent charm. Any good love story will draw in its audience, but in the case of *Guys and Dolls*, the characters are missing a certain something—call it charisma, magnetism or personality, if you will—that can establish a connection with the audience. The cast is, undoubtedly, multi-talented and more than capable of lassoing our hearts, but for some odd reason, they fail to fully immerse themselves into their roles.

Despite the character imperfections, *Guys and Dolls* still manages to keep its musical numbers, dance routines and intertwining plot alive with a never-ending sense of energy. The story centres upon Sky Masterson (John Devorick), a perpetual gambler, and his pursuit of Sarah Brown (Mairi Robb), a chaste and charitable missionary. Sky is

bet by another gambler, Nathan Detroit (Gordon Tanner), that he can't possibly win Sarah's approval. Nathan, believing Sky's chances of winning are slim, counts on collecting his earnings and proceeds to set up an illegal gambling spot with his soon-to-be-existent money. However, as the play progresses, Nathan soon realizes that the one thing he didn't count on might just be happening: Sky and Sarah are falling for each other.

The plot itself follows the typical guy-meets-girl, guy-falls-in-love-with-girl fashion, but with the addition of catchy musical numbers and well-choreographed dancing, there's no stopping the whimsical characters from tearing up the stage. Of course, being a musical, *Guys and Dolls* relies heavily on vocal talent and youthful jubilation, but in this case, the production goes over and above what is expected. Everything from the singing and dancing to the set and costumes is unbelievably believable; if you've never experienced the 1950s nightlife before, you're sure to catch a glimpse of what it was all about.

Now, all the glitz and glamour is fine, but there's an unspoken rule stating that the presence of extraordinary accessories—whether they are props, clothing, or the staging itself—usually means they are making up for a loss somewhere else. While it's hard to say that *Guys and Dolls* completely falls short in the acting category, there is an innate sense of desolation when it comes to character interactions. The relationship that wedges itself between Sky and Sarah, for example, contains no chemistry whatsoever; it's clear that they are acting as though they are in love, rather than truly fooling the audience into believing their love is real. Putting on a romantic play might seem to be an easy task, but if it's not performed with that loving spark, it'll fizzle out faster than you can say "dullsville."



For the most part, however, *Guys and Dolls* is entertaining and colourful, and doesn't go without its fair share of laughs. Even though a little more effort might be needed in creating that perfect alliance between character and actor, the classic

play is nonetheless a hit. It's never easy to meet the standards set by predecessors, and sometimes, like the Citadel's production of *Guys and Dolls*, you've just got to take a chance and roll with the big wigs, even if the stakes are high.



## Getting Up not worth getting down with

Decent premise is ruined by contrived elements and an offensive PC version

### Mark Ecko's *Getting Up: Contents Under Pressure*

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RAMIN OSTAD  
Arts & Entertainment Staff

Mark Ecko's *Getting Up: Contents Under Pressure* is a game that, despite its superfluous title, still manages a great premise. It's based on an original idea, and is, at its heart, fun to play, but unfortunately suffers from a variety of flaws that make an otherwise great game highly unappealing to the average gamer.

In the game, you play a character named Trane, a young graffiti artist who's trying to make a name for himself—*Getting Up* refers to getting his name up on a wall—in the dark, futuristic, *Blade Runner*-style city of New Radius, going against rival graffiti gangs and futuristic police called the CCK. The game has a fantastic visual style, with graffiti art covering every gritty crevice of the city. The game even incorporates art work from some famous graf artists, like Futura and Cope2. The soundtrack is also stellar, solidifying the game's urban feel with the likes of Talib Kweli, Mobb Deep, Pharoahe Monch, Del The Funky Homosapien, Eric B and Rakim. Combined, the game goes to great lengths to display its style.

*Getting Up*'s gameplay is a whole other story, unfortunately. The game suffers from a very severe case of "jack-of-all-trades" syndrome. It tries to amalgamate two or three genres into one package, and only does one of them with any competence. The main objective is to tag specific areas of each level with graffiti. Before each level, you can select four different tags in six different styles of graffiti from your "black book" to bring into the level. Sprayable areas are displayed

by pressing the "intuition" button, which highlights areas for Trane to get his name up on. When you step up to one of these areas, an outline of your tag will appear which you then spray paint over. This mechanic actually works fairly well, since you have to move Trane's arm in different directions to fill the outline and avoid "drips," which are spills that occur when you spray in one area for too long.

**Now, usually a PC version of a multi-platform game means it will have improved graphics, and perhaps iron out some of the glitches that appeared in the console versions. *Getting Up* takes a notably different route with its PC version, however, by making it completely unbearable to play.**

The game also has some sneaking, platforming and fighting elements that can only be described as awkward. The platforming is especially aggravating when you combine it with a camera that rarely stays in one position or responds to the user's wishes. The stealth sequences, on the other hand, just feel tacked on as sort of formality, since you almost always get caught, forcing you into a fight sequence. The fighting in the game, while containing a fair bit of depth in terms of manoeuvres, become boring very fast—mainly due to the fact that the enemy AI is just plain stupid and unchallenging. It seems Trane is the

only graffiti artist in New Radius with any fighting moves, because the rest of those suckers do nothing but punch and kick at you. They even forget to block when you're swinging full force at their heads with a two-by-four.

*Getting Up* was released for the Xbox and Playstation 2 and also has a PC version. Now, usually a PC version of a multi-platform game means it will have improved graphics, and perhaps iron out some of the glitches that appeared in the console versions. *Getting Up* takes a notably different route with its PC version, however, by making it completely unbearable to play. For starters, the game's load times can go up to just under four minutes, which is flat-out ridiculous considering the PS2 version clocks in at about 30 seconds. Also, there's very little in terms of graphical improvement—the maximum resolution you can set the game is 1024x768—and it doesn't sport any advanced customization. Any gamer who has invested in a high-end graphics card will likely not be interested in investing in this game. Equally annoying is that the controls are barely customizable, which is ultimately the final blow that makes it seem as though the PC version of the game is more of an inconsiderate afterthought than a planned and thought-through release.

This isn't to say that *Getting Up* is necessarily a bad game; it's just not a particularly great one. It has a very definitive style, an amazing soundtrack and an interesting and well-developed story, but the gameplay is, in a lot of instances, simply not there, making a somewhat fun game annoying to play. While spraying the graffiti and the fighting system can be fairly entertaining, the ten-plus hours you'll get out of the game—not to mention the lack of any replayability—make *Getting Up* worth renting, but not worth full price.

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# Paul Walker delivers 'standout' performance in *Running Scared*

Walker's performance is certainly outstanding, but unfortunately as a bad part of a film filled with movie-killing faults

## Running Scared

Directed by Wayne Kramer  
Starring Paul Walker, Cameron Bright  
and Vera Farmiga  
Now Playing

DANA KOMPERDO  
Arts & Entertainment Writer

Paul Walker isn't the worst part of *Running Scared*. It's a backhanded compliment, but also maybe the nicest thing you can say about a thriller that not only doesn't thrill, but tries so hard to be an artistic picture that it loses control over its plot, which, for a thriller, should be somewhat easy to control. If the writers had just tried to make this into a black comedy, it could very easily have been hilarious, instead of the ridiculous feature now occupying theatres.

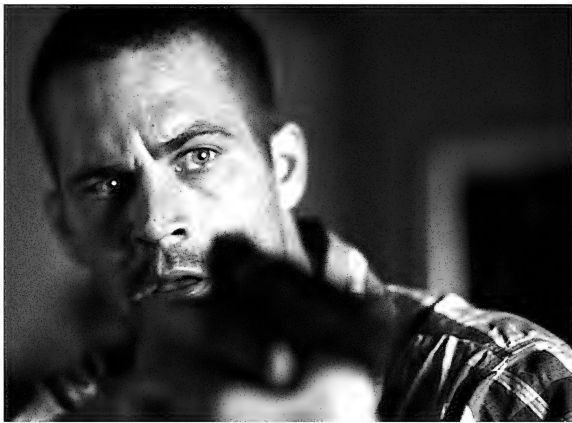
The movie begins with a hotel shootout between the mob, some drug dealers and a pair of dirty cops. When the mobsters—one of which is our shining star Paul Walker as Joey Gazelle—emerge having killed one of the cops, Joey is ordered by his superiors to get rid of the only evidence that ties them to the killing—the murder weapon. Joey, however, keeps the gun hidden in his house as a personal "insurance policy" should the mob turn on him. The gun, however, is quickly found by Joey's ten-year-old son, Nicky (Alex Neuberger) and his friend, Oleg (Cameron Bright).

The real action begins when Oleg takes the pistol to shoot and slightly maim his abusive father, Ivan Yurgorsky (John Noble), who happens to be a rejected member of the

Russian mafia, which, although not clearly explained at the time, will predictably cause problems for Joey, who has told all involved that the gun had been disposed of. Having shot his father, Oleg immediately runs away with the gun, leaving Joey to track him down before the surviving cop and his mobster buddies get to him first.

While the synopsis accurately suggests a painfully standard plot, the filming of the story is perhaps the movie's one redeeming factor. The motel shooting is recounted using impressive camera angles and stylized cinematography, making scenes have an almost illustrated feel to them, which appears throughout the movie. The energy and money put into this one aspect of the movie, however, seems to have caused the remainder to flounder. The result is a film that very much feels like a badly written comic book adaptation.

In many ways, the acting runs the opposite course: while almost all of the characters do superb jobs, the one big "star," Paul Walker, completely flounders. The members of the Russian family next door are all depressed in their own way, the members of the mob are all violence-loving, swearing jerks, and the Gazelle family is kept grounded by the mother, the only person who resembles normal in the film. They are as talented as need be for a violent thriller and pull off their roles convincingly. The two boys may actually be the most outstanding, as they manage to make it sort of believable that this concoction of almost



**P-WALK DOES IT AGAIN!** Unfortunately, given this weekend's release of *Running Scared*, that isn't a good thing.

random events could have a point. Walker, on the other hand, manages to stumble through the film with a confused expression seemingly permanently implanted on his face, while still managing to have a several-minute long conversation about how Oleg isn't Russian, he's an American, dammit!

The small characters that appear throughout the film manage to both add to *Running Scared*'s interesting cast while also increasing its scattered,

disorganized feel. The fleeing Oleg manages to meet a large number of people during a single night, including hobos, a hooker (with a heart of gold, no less), a normal looking couple who turns out to be the most messed up of everybody and a plethora of his father's Russian mafia buddies. These characters are interesting, if unbelievable, and ultimately serve mainly as distraction from the plot and expendable characters in a cluttered movie.

*Running Scared*, while not a total loss, manages to come pretty close. When you have an entire theatre scoffing throughout a film, something has gone terribly wrong, and in this case, it isn't just the presence of P-Walk that led to the movie's demise. The film is inventive and visually interesting, but feels more like a brain-damaged Tarantino attempt—perfect for a story starring Paul Walker, but ultimately bad news for the audience.

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# Superhero team makes for a not-so-super movie

*Ultimate Avengers* isn't a terrible movie, but the animated feature doesn't live up to its comic origin

## Ultimate Avengers: The Movie

Voice direction by Jamie Simone  
Animation direction by Tae-Ho Han  
Starring Justin Gross, David Boat, Grey DeLisle, Michael Massee, Nolan North,  
Fred Tatasciore and Marc Worden  
Now available

EDMON ROTEA  
Arts & Entertainment Staff

After months of eager anticipation, Marvel fans can rejoice with the release of *Ultimate Avengers: The Movie*, a direct-to-DVD feature-length animated adventure. The film itself is an adaptation of the popular Marvel comic *The Ultimates*, a modern-day contemporary re-telling of the popular Avengers comic book team, written by Mark Millar and illustrated by Bryan Hitch.

Logic would point to an animated version of a comic book being quite similar to the source material; the mediums are similar, and you don't really need to change many details in order to bring an animated movie to life. However, *The Ultimate Avengers* still manages to get the movie not quite right, with the story watered down for larger audiences.

The movie introduces us to the traditional Avengers heroes: Captain America, Thor, The Hulk, Iron Man, Wasp, and Giant Man. Supporting the cast include mainstays of *The Ultimates* comic books, including Dr. Betty Ross (Bruce Banner/Hulk's girlfriend) and Nick Fury, the head of the covert espionage military organization known as S.H.I.E.L.D.

For viewers who have never read *The Ultimates*, the plot of *Ultimate Avengers: The Movie* merely resembles the first two story-acts of the comic book, including the team's struggle to defeat the Hulk and a battle with the shape-shifting Chitauri aliens.

The movie begins by introducing viewers to the World War II super soldier known as Captain America, who's shown fighting off Nazis who are actually disguised and under control of the evil Chitauri. Captain America makes a horrifying discovery: the Nazis have already devel-



oped—and are ready to deploy—the first nuclear missile, with is aimed directly for America. Acting courageously, Captain America sabotages the missile mid-flight and thwarts the Chitauri's plans, but ultimately falls into the frigid Arctic waters and remains missing-in-action for the next 60 years.

Fortunately, the super soldier serum that created Captain America also allows him to survive for all those years. His body, cryogenically frozen in a block of ice, is found and recovered by Nick Fury and Dr. Betty Ross. However, at the same time, the Chitauri's return to Earth, destroying the specially designed S.H.I.E.L.D. satellites that can detect the alien's presence. After Captain America is revived, Nick Fury is forced to jumpstart "Project Avengers"—America's plan to horde off the alien invasion (or super-powered terrorists, as was originally written in the comics).

What follows is an adventure that introduces us to the remainder of the cast: the former KGB assassin and spy Natasha Romanova (The Black

Widow), billionaire industrialist and weapons developer Tony Stark (creator and bearer of the Iron Man armor), the left-wing protester and Asgardian God of Thunder (Thor), the introverted Dr. Bruce Banner (The Hulk), along with biologist Janet Pym (Wasp) and her arrogant, stubborn husband Dr. Hank Pym (Giant Man). For a first-time direct-to-DVD animated release, casual viewers and first-time Avengers fans may enjoy this feature. Hardcore *Ultimates* readers, however, may be ultimately disappointed after viewing. While the movie features sophisticated animation that goes beyond most Saturday morning cartoons, the mix of Japanese anime and computer-generated designs is still no match for the level of detail seen in Bryan Hitch's artwork present in *The Ultimates*.

The plot of the movie is also too simplistic: there is little character development other than what the dedicated fans can get from the comics, and the storyline is missing Millar's socio-political subtext and

the pop-cultural references that made *The Ultimates* so ingrossing. Marvel probably watered down the story to make the movie more accessible to younger audiences and casual viewers, but these changes may also alienate the dedicated fans that waited to see the comic book in movie form.

The high point of *Ultimate Avengers* may perhaps be the voice acting. The voice actors certainly characterize the personalities reflected in *The Ultimates*, and bring the superheroes to life in a way that seems fitting to how they appear in the comics. However, Nick Fury can sound too stoic (whereas his comic book counterpart has a better sense of humor in the style of Samuel L. Jackson's *Shaft* movie after ego) while Captain America sounds more like a boyish teenager.

*Ultimate Avengers: The Movie* is not a bad first attempt of a Marvel animated feature. But for Marvel comic book fans, reading *The Ultimates* is a better fix for your comic book reading cravings.



## The Slackers

Peculiar  
Hellcat Records  
www.theslackers.com

ADAM GAUMONT  
Arts & Entertainment Staff

There's nothing peculiar about The Slackers themselves: they're the holy keepers of the ska tradition; one of the few bands still grooving from the Ska revival of the '90s, a few personnel changes notwithstanding.

What is peculiar about this album, though, is the fact that it was recorded live—sort of. The tracks were brought back into the studio to be polished up and overdubbed, thereby capturing the energy of their live performances while still giving it the slick, finished quality of a studio recording.

Or at least that was the idea. To the listener, the only indication that it was recorded live comes on "Saaron," where the cheers of the audience book-end the music. Peculiar is otherwise so tightly mastered and edited it feels close enough to a standard studio LP as to make the "live" label null and void. However, this album still manages to make one want to get out and see the Slackers live at the earliest opportunity, with their musicianship and songwriting trumping any overproduction that has crept into their "live" recording.

For all the fun, energetic vibes that ska produces, however, some tracks on this album are quite politically charged. "Propaganda" condemns what its title unambiguously suggests, while "International War Criminal" criticizes US foreign policy.

At its core, however, this album is pure, high-grade ska, with elements of swing, jazz, and reggae necessarily present, with tracks such as "Crazy" and "Keep It Simple" standing as testaments to those genre influences. The album ends with a reggae-infused version of Dylan's "I Shall Be Released," capping off a disc filled with an array of solid ska tracks that explore a variety of lyrical avenues, making Peculiar worth at least one "live" experience: a spin in your record player.



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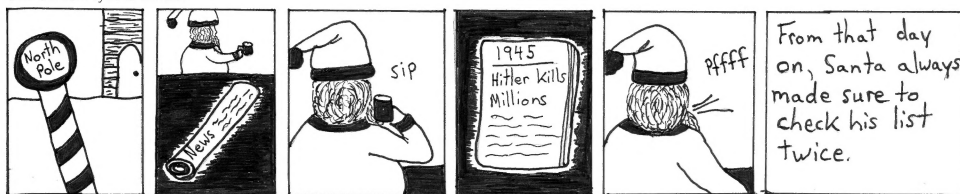
## PEANUT &amp; CIRCLE by Chris Krause



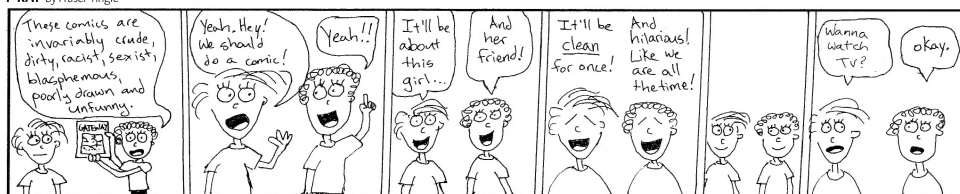
## HALEY'S COMIX by Mike Robertson



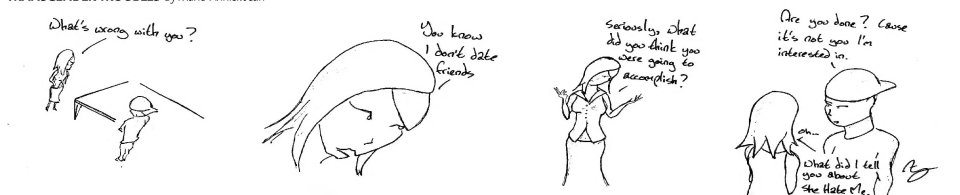
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